

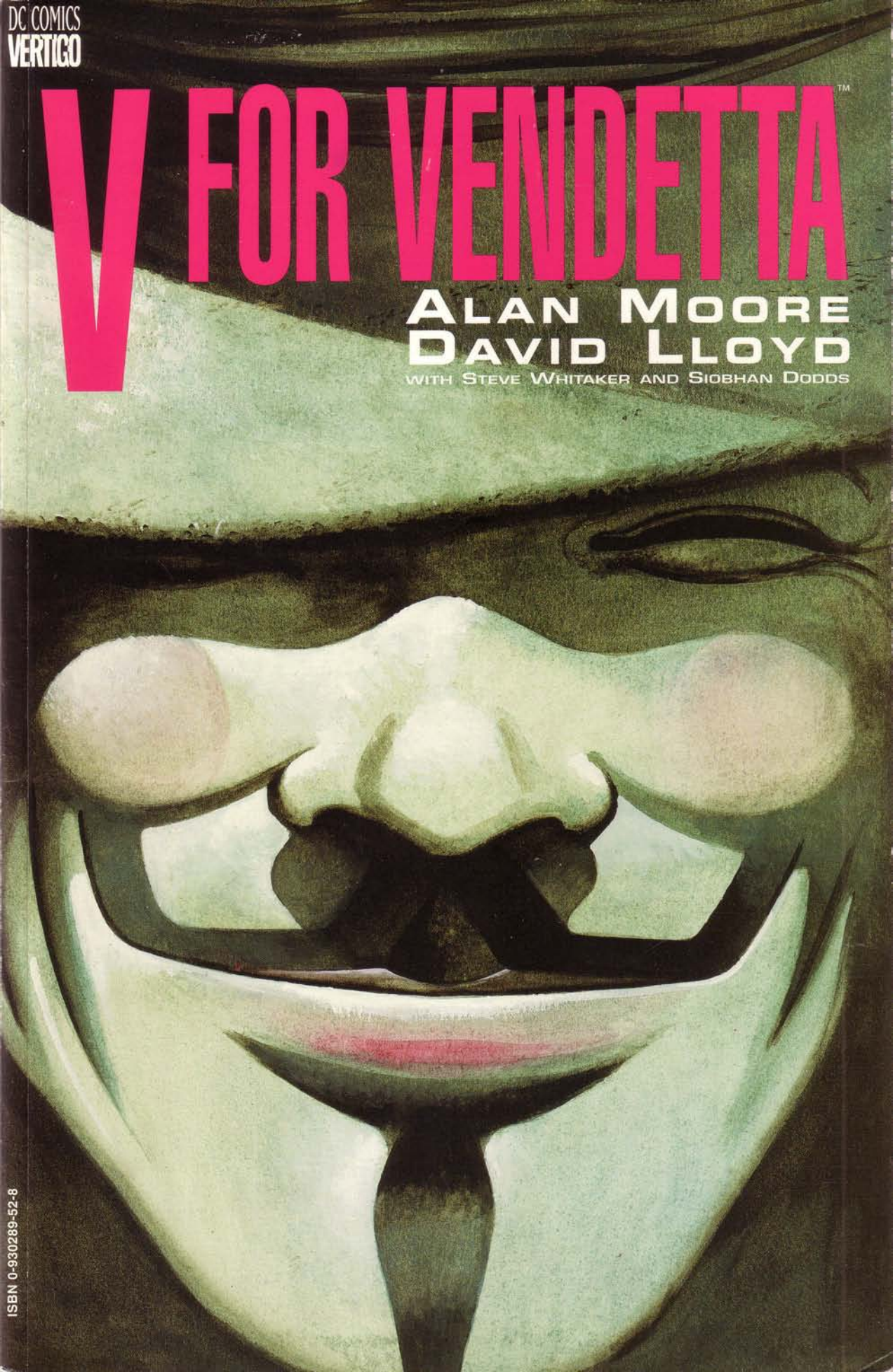
DC COMICS
VERTIGO

V FOR VENDETTA™

ALAN MOORE
DAVID LLOYD

WITH STEVE WHITAKER AND SIOBHAN DODDS

ISBN 0-930289-52-8



V FOR VENDETTA

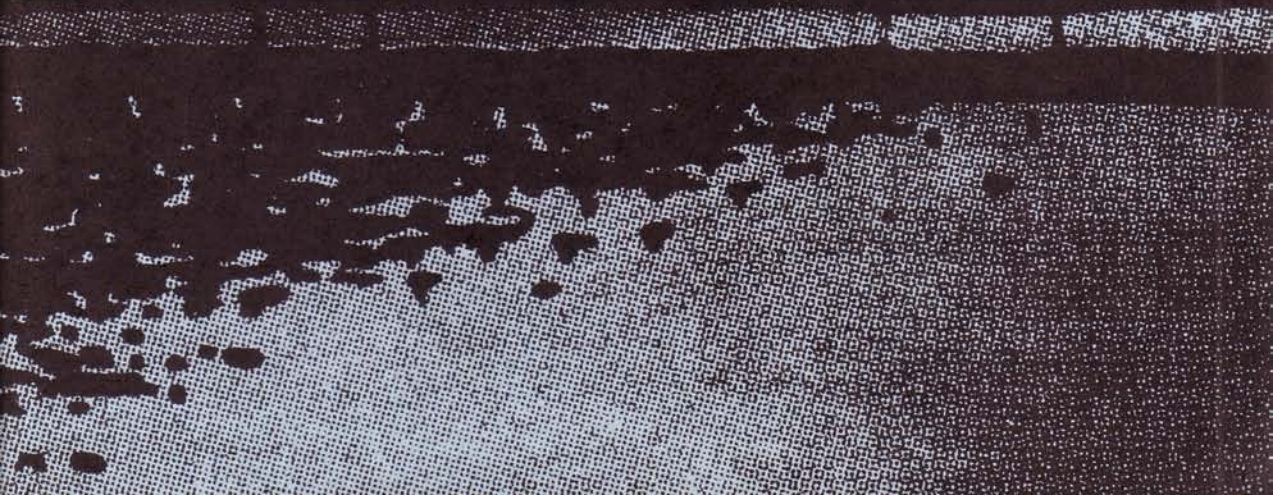
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DAVID LLOYD

V FOR



VENDETTA



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V FOR VENDETTA

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DC COMICS

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few nights ago, I walked into a pub on my way home and ordered a Guinness.

I didn't look at my watch, but I knew it was before 8 o'clock. It was Tuesday and I could hear the television in the background still running the latest episode of "EastEnders"—a soap about the day-to-day life of cheeky, cheery working-class people in a decaying, mythical part of London.

I sat in a booth and picked up a copy of a free newspaper someone had left on the seat beside me. I'd read it before. There wasn't much news in it. I put down the paper and decided to sit at the bar.

It wasn't a busy night. I could hear the murmuring of the distant TV above the chatter of the people at the bar and the clack-clack of colliding snooker balls.

After "EastEnders" came "Porridge"—a re-run of a situation comedy series about a cheeky, cheery prisoner in a comfortably unoppressive, decaying, Victorian prison.

Almost imperceptibly, spirits leaked from the optics of upturned bottles behind the bar. Droplets of whisky and vodka formed and fell soundlessly as I watched.

I finished my drink. I looked up and the barman caught my eye. "Guinness?" he asked, already reaching for a fresh glass. I nodded.

The barman's wife arrived and began to help with the trickle of customers' orders.

At 8:30, following "Porridge," came "A Question Of Sport"—a simple panel quiz game featuring cheeky, cheery sports celebrities answering questions about other sports celebrities, many of whom were as cheeky and cheery as themselves.

Jocularly reigned.

"I'll tell the barman about the leaking optics," I thought.

"The Nine o'Clock News" followed "A Question Of Sport." Or, at least for 30 seconds it did, before the television was switched off and cheeky, cheery pop music took its place.

I looked over at the barman. "Just half this time," I said.

As he filled the glass, I solemnly asked him why he'd switched off the News. "Don't ask me—that was the wife," he replied, in a cheeky, cheery manner, as the subject of his playful targeting bustled in a corner of the bar.

The leaking optics had ceased to have any importance for me.

I finished my drink and left, almost certain the TV would be silent for the rest of the evening. For after "The Nine o'Clock News" would have come "The Boys From Brazil," a film with few cheeky, cheery characters in it, which is all about a bunch of Nazis creating 94 clones of Adolf Hitler.

There aren't many cheeky, cheery characters in V FOR VENDETTA either; and it's for people who don't switch off the News.

David Lloyd

14 January 90

I began V FOR VENDETTA in the summer of 1981, during a working holiday upon the Isle of Wight. My youngest daughter, Amber, was a few months old. I finished it in the late winter of 1988, after a gap in publishing of nearly five years from the discontinuation of England's *Warrior* magazine, its initial home. Amber is now seven. I don't know why I mentioned that. It's just one of those unremarkable facts that strike you suddenly, with unexpected force, so that you have to go and sit down.

Along with Marvelman (now Miracleman), V FOR VENDETTA represents my first attempt at a continuing series, begun at the outset of my career. For this reason, amongst others, there are things that ring oddly in earlier episodes when judged in the light of the strip's later development. I trust you'll bear with us during any initial clumsiness, and share our opinion that it was for the best to show the early episodes unrevised, warts and all, rather than go back and eradicate all trace of youthful creative inexperience.

There is also a certain amount of political inexperience upon my part evident in these early episodes. Back in 1981 the term "nuclear winter" had not passed into common currency, and although my guess about climatic upheaval came pretty close to the eventual truth of the situation, the fact remains that the story to hand suggests that a nuclear war, even a limited one, might be survivable. To the best of my current knowledge, this is not the case.

Naiveté can also be detected in my supposition that it would take something as melodramatic as a near-miss nuclear conflict to nudge England towards fascism. Although in fairness to myself and David, there were no better or more accurate predictions of our country's future available in comic form at that time. The simple fact that much of the historical background of the story proceeds from a predicted Conservative defeat in the 1982 General Election should tell you how reliable we were in our role as Cassandras.

It's 1988 now. Margaret Thatcher is entering her third term of office and talking confidently of an unbroken Conservative leadership well into the next century. My youngest daughter is seven and the tabloid press are circulating the idea of concentration camps for persons with AIDS. The new riot police wear black visors, as do their horses, and their vans have rotating video cameras mounted on top. The government has expressed a desire to eradicate homosexuality, even as an abstract concept, and one can only speculate as to which minority will be the next legislated against. I'm thinking of taking my family and getting out of this country soon, sometime over the next couple of years. It's cold and it's mean spirited and I don't like it here anymore.

Goodnight England. Goodnight Home Service and V for Victory.

Hello the Voice of Fate and V FOR VENDETTA.

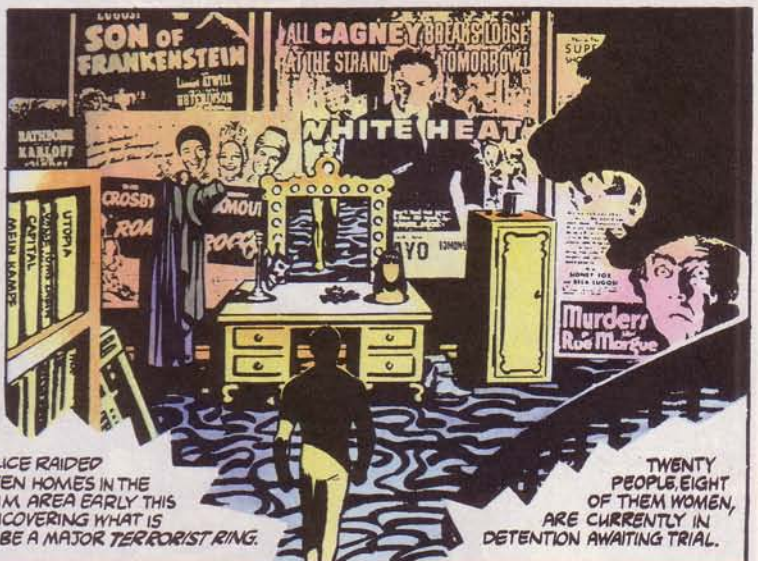
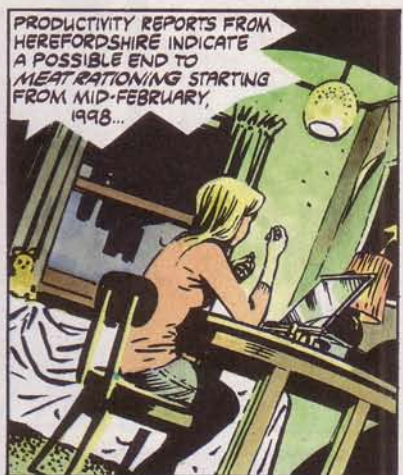
Alan Moore

Northampton, March 1988

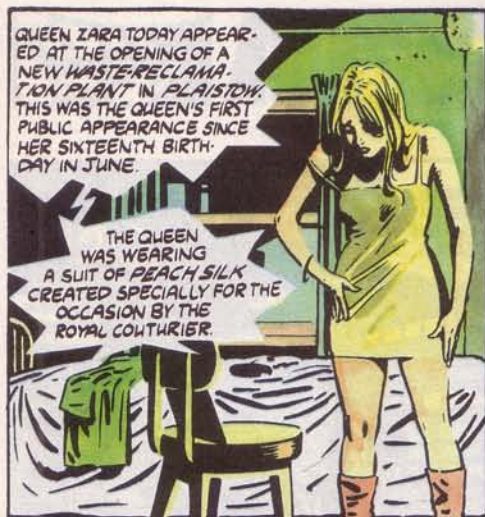


EUROPE AFTER THE REIGN

V FOR VENDETTA



TWENTY PEOPLE, EIGHT OF THEM WOMEN, ARE CURRENTLY IN DETENTION AWAITING TRIAL.











NOVEMBER THE SIXTH, 1997 IT IS SIX-THIRTY IN THE MORNING...

I WILL HEAR YOUR REPORTS NOW, GENTLEMEN.

MR. HEYER WILL SPEAK FOR THE ETC.

WE HAVE JUST UNDER THREE MINUTES OF USEABLE FOOTAGE, LEADER. THE LARGE MAJORITY OF OUR VHS RECORDERS WERE DAMAGED IN THE EXPLOSION.

TO MY LEFT IS AN ENLARGEMENT OF THE SUSPECT'S FACE. I'M AFRAID THE MASK MAKES IDENTIFICATION IMPOSSIBLE.

CLOSE-UP IF YOU PLEASE, MR. HEYER...

AH. THANK YOU MR. HEYER. MR. ETHERIDGE WILL NOW SPEAK FOR THE EARS.

UH... PHONE SURVEILLANCE INDICATES THAT A LARGE PROPORTION OF THE UH, PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT THE, UH, EXPLOSION, THAT'S INSIDE LONDON.

ALL SUSPECT OR SIGNIFICANT TRANSCRIPTS ARE BEING FORWARDED TO MR. UH, ALMOND AT THE FINGER.

MR. ALMOND IS WITH ME AT PRESENT. I SHALL INFORM HIM. MR. FINCH WILL SPEAK FOR THE NOSE...

WE'VE FOUND THE DEVICE PROBABLY USED TO LAUNCH THE FIREWORKS AND SOME SPENT CASINGS. INDIVIDUALLY WEIGHTED FLARES AT A GUESS.

DESPITE ITS SOPHISTICATION I SHOULD SAY THAT THE DEVICE WAS ALMOST CERTAINLY HOME-MADE, AND THUS UNTRACEABLE. SORRY, LEADER. NOTHING ELSE YET.

THANK YOU, MR. FINCH. THE THREE OF YOU WILL INFORM ME OF ANY FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS AND AWAIT MY DIRECTIVE, ENGLAND PREVAILS, GENTLEMEN.

WELL, WE HAVE HEARD FROM THE REST OF THE HEAD. THAT LEAVES YOU, MR. ALMOND. THREE FINGERMEN WERE KILLED LAST NIGHT BY ONE SOLITARY LUNATIC.

IT IS ALSO HIGHLY PROBABLE THAT THIS SAME PERSON HAD EARLIER PLANTED AN EXPLOSIVE DEVICE OF STARTLING CAPABILITY WITHIN THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

LEADER, I.













NOW, AS I WAS SAYING, THERE WAS PORKY WITH ONE HAND...

JUST A MINUTE, MR. PROTHERO! SHOOTERS OUT, TED, JUST IN CASE.



I'M SORRY, MR. PROTHERO... PLEASE GO ON...



AND SO THE ELDEST GEL SAYS "WITH A MONKEY?? I SHOULD BLOODY COCOA!!" HA HA HA HA! GOOD ONE, EH?

HMM. THEY DO SEEM TO BE TAKING THEIR TIME, DON'T THEY? PERHAPS YOU SHOULD GO AND HAVE A WORD WITH THE DRIVER, GEORGE.

GEORGE?



...GEORGE?

DON'T TAKE OFFENCE, GEORGE. IT WAS JUST A NAUGHTY YARN. WE'RE ALL MEN OF THE WORLD, EH, GEORGE?



...GEORGE?

OH MY GOD! TED, IT'S GEORGE! HE'S...



...TED?

OH LORD! WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH THE PAIR OF YOU?? FOR CHRIST'S SAKE, SOMEBODY SAY SOMETHING!!



HELLO.

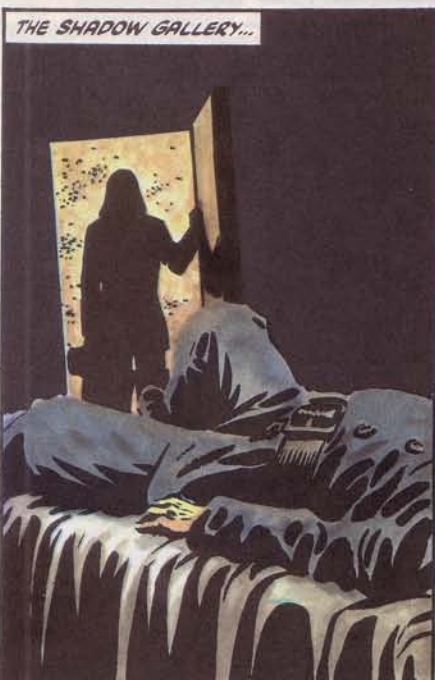
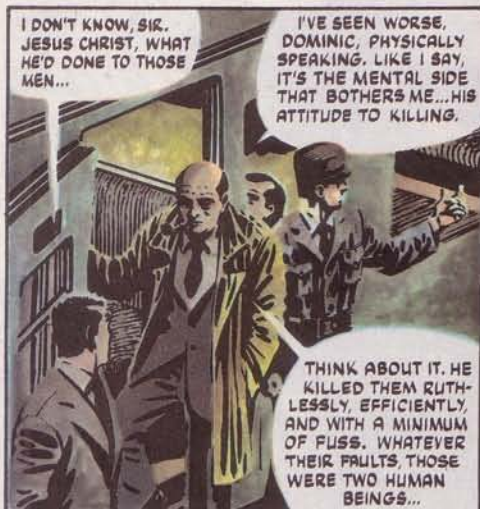


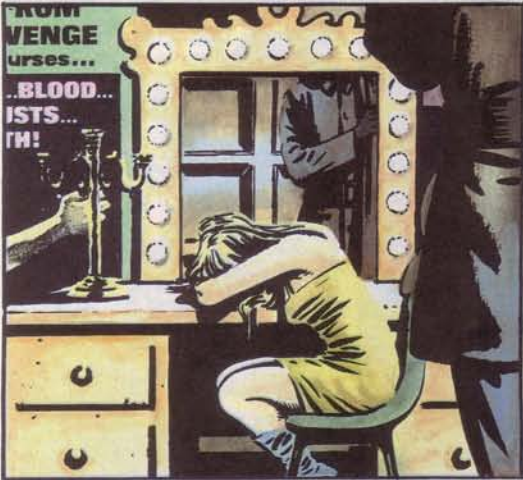
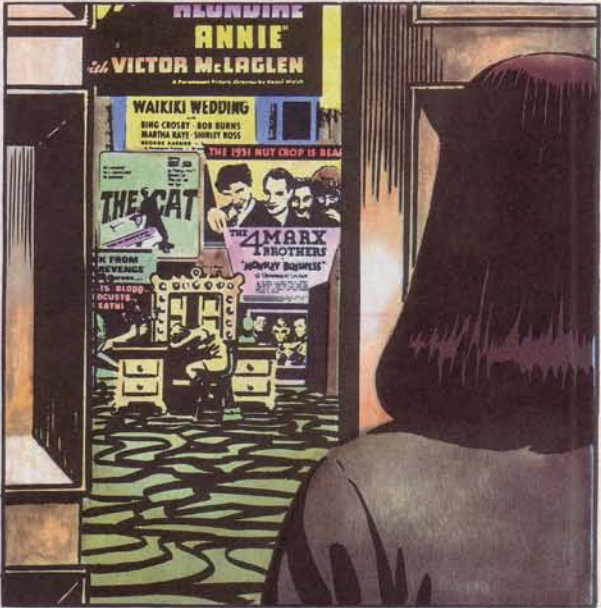


Chapter Three

VICTIMS







I-I'M SORRY. YOU STARTLED ME. I DIDN'T HEAR YOU COME IN...

NOBODY EVER DOES. YOU'VE BEEN CRYING.

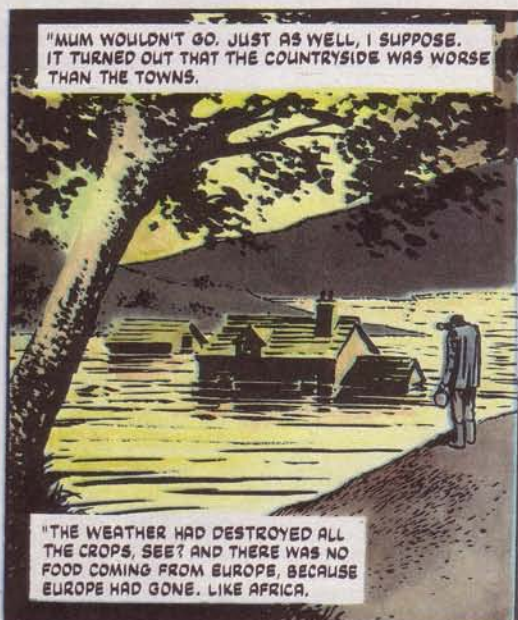
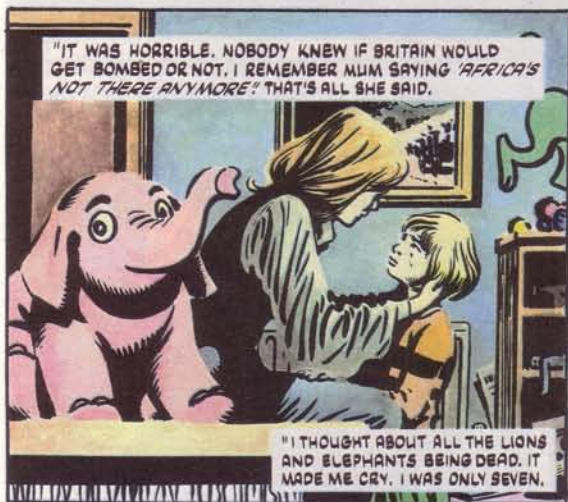
YES. DON'T TAKE ANY NOTICE OF ME. I'M A BABY.

I-I WAS WHEN YOU WENT OUT EARLIER ON AND DIDN'T SAY WHERE YOU WERE GOING... I THOUGHT ... I DIDN'T THINK... THAT IS, I MEAN...

I WAS SCARED YOU WOULDN'T COME BACK.

I KNOW I'M STUPID, BUT MY LIFE'S SUDDENLY BECOME VERY STRANGE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING ANYMORE.





"I-I DIDN'T LIKE TO THINK ABOUT THE NEXT FOUR YEARS. WE'D GOT TOGETHER WITH SOME NEIGHBOURS IN A PROTECTION COMMITTEE. IT DIDN'T HELP MUCH....

"THERE WAS NO FOOD. AND THE SEWERS WERE FLOODED AND EVERYBODY GOT SICK. MUM DIED IN 1991. DAD WOULDN'T LET ME SEE HER.

"THERE WERE RIOTS, AND PEOPLE WITH GUNS. NOBODY KNEW WHAT WAS GOING ON. EVERYONE WAS WAITING FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO DO SOMETHING....

"BUT THERE WASN'T ANY GOVERNMENT ANYMORE. JUST LOTS OF LITTLE GANGS, ALL TRYING TO TAKE OVER. AND THEN IN 1992, SOMEBODY FINALLY DID....

"IT WAS ALL THE FASCIST GROUPS, THE RIGHT-WINGERS. THEY'D ALL GOT TOGETHER WITH SOME OF THE BIG CORPORATIONS THAT HAD SURVIVED. 'NORSEFIRE' THEY CALLED THEMSELVES.

"I REMEMBER WHEN THEY MARCHED INTO LONDON. THEY HAD A FLAG WITH THEIR SYMBOL ON. EVERYONE WAS CHEERING. I THOUGHT THEY WERE SCARY.

"THEY SOON GOT THINGS UNDER CONTROL. BUT THEN THEY STARTED TAKING PEOPLE AWAY... ALL THE BLACK PEOPLE AND THE PAKISTANIS...

"WHITE PEOPLE, TOO. ALL THE RADICALS AND THE MEN WHO, YOU KNOW, LIKED OTHER MEN. THE HOMOSEXUALS. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY DID WITH THEM ALL.

"DAD HAD BEEN IN A SOCIALIST GROUP WHEN HE WAS YOUNGER. THEY CAME FOR HIM ONE SEPTEMBER MORNING IN 1993...

"IT WAS MY BIRTHDAY. I WAS TWELVE. I NEVER SAW HIM AGAIN.

"THEY MADE ME GO AND WORK IN A FACTORY WITH A LOT OF OTHER KIDS. WE WERE PUTTING MATCHES INTO BOXES.

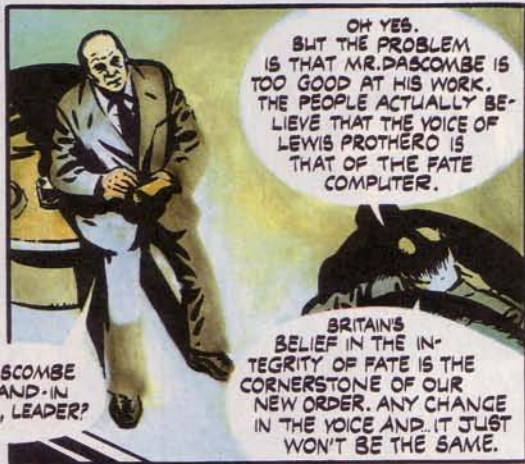
"I LIVED IN A HOSTEL. IT WAS COLD AND DIRTY AND I JUST USED TO CRY ALL THE TIME. I WANTED MY DAD."

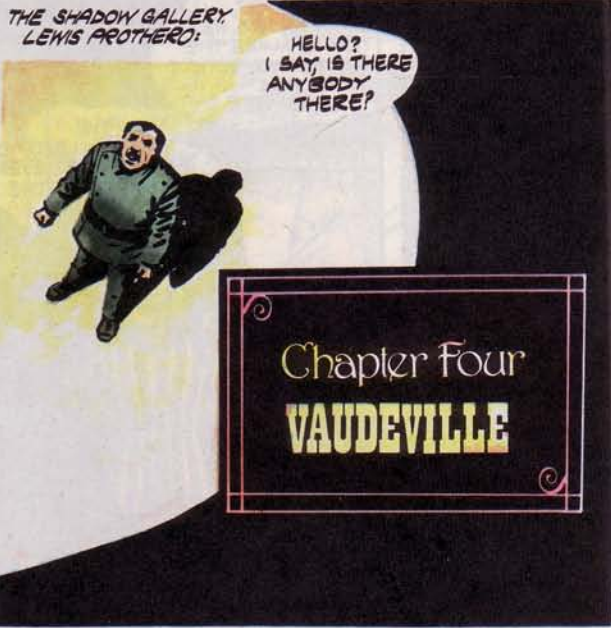
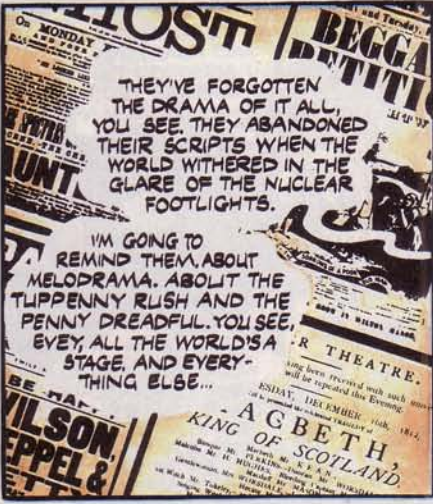
...THAT'S HOW IT WAS FOR FOUR YEARS... NOT ENOUGH FOOD, NOT ENOUGH MONEY. SOME OF THE OLDER GIRLS MADE MONEY GOING WITH MEN.

THAT'S WHAT I WAS GOING TO DO, LAST NIGHT. BUT THEY WERE FINGERMEN. THEY WERE GOING... THEY WERE G-GOING TO...

THEY WERE GOING TO RUH... RUH... RUH...









I SUPPOSE YOU THINK ALL THIS IS BLOODY FLINNY, ALL THIS RESETTLEMENT CAMP MALARKEY, ALL THIS PUTTING ME IN UNIFORM.

WELL, ALL I CAN SAY IS THAT YOU'VE GOT A DAMN QUEER SENSE OF HUMOUR.

DAMN QUEER.



YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG MAN, CHUMMY. THE RESETTLEMENT CAMPS MEAN BUGGER ALL TO ME. BUGGER ALL. YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG MAN!

OH GOD. IS THERE ANYBODY THERE?



GOOD MORNING, CAMPER.



UNIFORM ALL BRUSHED, PRESSED AND READY FOR DUTY, I SEE. GOOD MAN, COMMANDER PROTHERO. GOOD MAN.

I...

LET'S GET TO WORK, SHALL WE? THESE CONCENTRATION CAMPS... SORRY... THESE RESETTLEMENT CAMPS DON'T RUIN THEMSELVES, DO THEY?



LOOK. I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU ARE OR HOW YOU GOT THIS BLOODY SILLY IDEA INTO YOUR BONNET, BUT YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG MAN!

I'M A BROADCASTER. I DIDN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE CON... WITH THE RESETTLEMENT CAMPS. I...

...WH...



LARKHILL. 1993.

I WAS THERE, COMMANDER PROTHERO.



YOU WERE TH...

OH GOD.



LOOK SMART, COMMANDER. WE'VE GOT TO MAKE THE TOUR OF INSPECTION NOW. YOU REMEMBER...

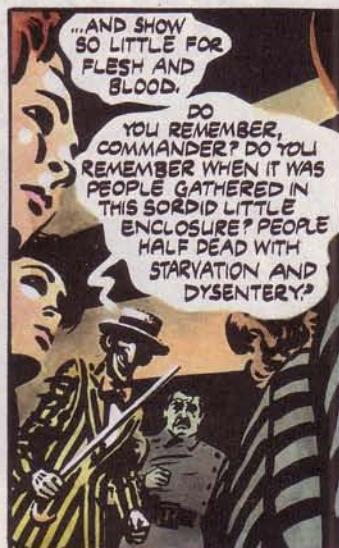
THE WAY YOU USED TO MAKE IT EVERY EVENING. BACK IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS.

OH GOD.

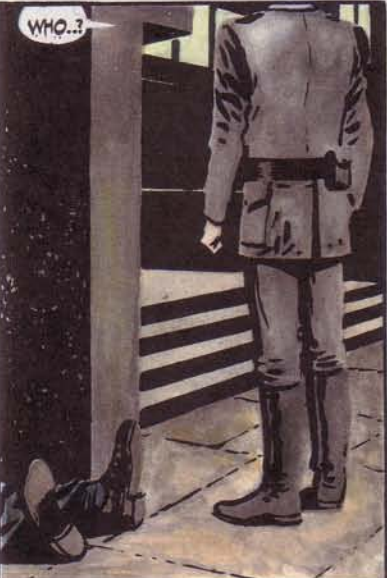


ALL COMING BACK TO YOU, EH? THE MAIN BODY OF THE PRISONERS WOULD BE GATHERED IN THE YARD AWAITING YOUR INSPECTION...

YOU SIMPLY HAD TO WALK FROM YOUR OFFICE DOWN PAST THE NISSEN HUTS, TURN THE CORNER...











DECEMBER 12TH, 1997. FIRST VERSION:



MY NAME IS ADAM SUSAN.
I AM THE LEADER.



LEADER OF THE LOST,
RULER OF THE RUINS.

I AM A MAN, LIKE
ANY OTHER MAN.

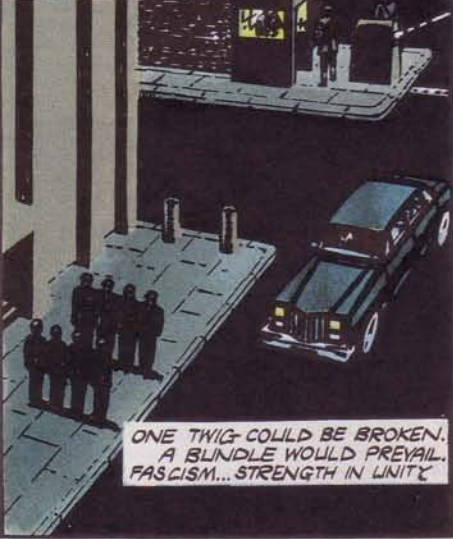
I LEAD THE COUNTRY THAT I LOVE OUT OF
THE WILDERNESS OF THE TWENTIETH
CENTURY. I BELIEVE IN SURVIVAL, IN THE
DESTINY OF THE NORDIC RACE. I BELIEVE
IN FASCISM.



OH YES, I AM A FASCIST. WHAT OF IT?
FASCISM... A WORD. A WORD WHOSE
MEANING HAS BEEN LOST IN THE
BLEATINGS OF THE WEAK AND THE
TREACHEROUS.



THE ROMANS INVENTED FASCISM.
A BUNDLE OF BOUND TWIGS
WAS ITS SYMBOL.



ONE TWIG COULD BE BROKEN.
A BUNDLE WOULD PREVAIL.
FASCISM... STRENGTH IN UNITY.



I BELIEVE IN STRENGTH.
I BELIEVE
IN UNITY.

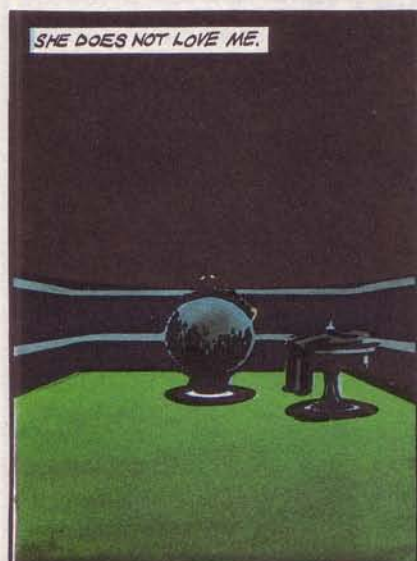
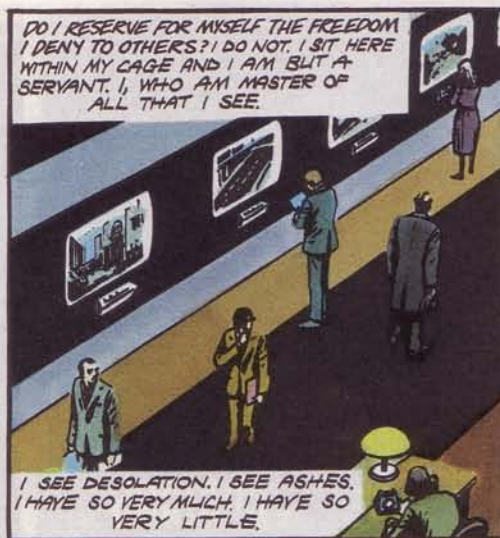
AND IF THAT STRENGTH, THAT
UNITY OF PURPOSE, DEMANDS
A UNIFORMITY OF THOUGHT,
WORD AND DEED THEN SO BE IT.

I WILL NOT HEAR TALK OF FREEDOM.
I WILL NOT HEAR TALK OF INDIVIDUAL
LIBERTY. THEY ARE LUXURIES.
I DO NOT BELIEVE IN LUXURIES.



THE WAR PUT PAID
TO LUXURY.

THE WAR PUT PAID
TO FREEDOM.













THE SHADOW GALLERY.
DECEMBER 15TH, 1997.

"Y.Y.Y.Y.Y."

EVEY
EVEY EVEY
EVEY EVEY



SOMETIMES I COULD
JUST PUNCH YOU IN
YOUR STUPID SMILEY
FACE! "Y.Y.Y.Y.Y." IT'S THE
INSCRIPTION ON THAT
ARCH IN THE BIG HALL.
YOU KNOW IT IS.

I JUST
WONDERED
WHAT IT MEANT,
THAT'S ALL.



IT'S
A QUOTATION.
A MOTTO... "VI
YER I VENIVERSUM
VIVUS VICI."

"BY THE POWER
OF TRUTH, I, WHILE
LIVING, HAVE CONQUER-
ED THE UNIVERSE."
LATIN.



HMMM. I SUPPOSE YOU
HAVE, SORT OF YOU
CAN DO WHAT-
EVER YOU WANT,
CAN'T YOU?
I SUPPOSE THAT'S
CONQUERING THE
UNIVERSE. DOING WHAT
YOU WANT.

THIS
PLACE IS THE
ONLY UNIVERSE I'VE
GOT AT THE
MOMENT.



DOES THAT
BOTHER
YOU?

NO.
YES. OH, I
DUNNO.

IT'S JUST
THAT I KEEP THINKING
I SHOULD TRY TO HELP
YOU, THE WAY YOU'RE
HELPING ME. I MEAN,
THAT'S THE DEAL,
ISN'T IT?



NO
DEALS, EVEY. NOT
UNLESS YOU WANT
THEM.

I..I THINK I DO. I MEAN,
PART OF ME JUST WANTS
TO STAY IN HERE FOREVER
AND NEVER HAVE TO GO
OUTSIDE AND FACE
WHAT'S GOING ON...



BUT THAT'S NOT
RIGHT, IS IT? THAT'S NOT
TAKING RESPONSIBILITY
FOR MYSELF, LIKE WHAT
YOU SAID. I WANT TO HELP
YOU, Y. I WANT TO
DO SOMETHING.

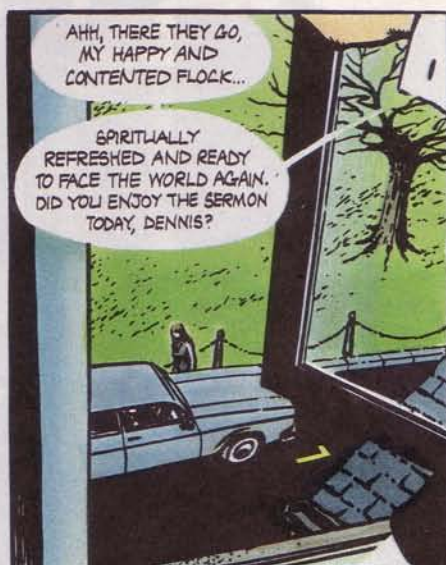
I WON'T GET IN
THE WAY, I PROMISE.
CAN I, Y? CAN
WE MAKE A
DEAL?



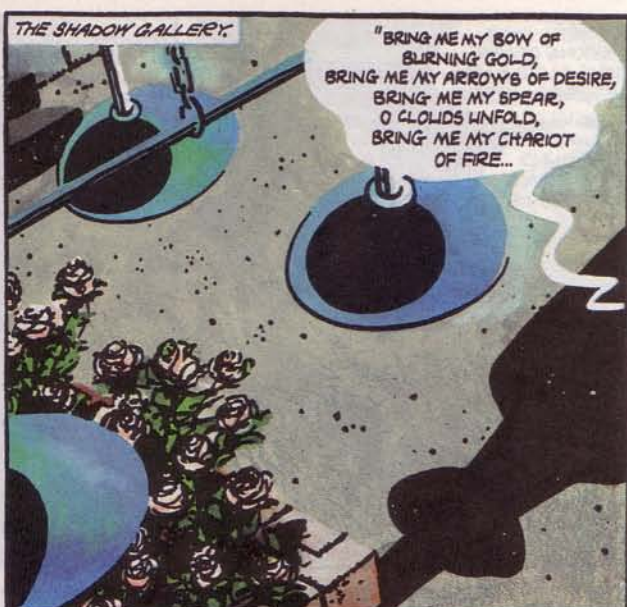


Chapter Six
THE VISION

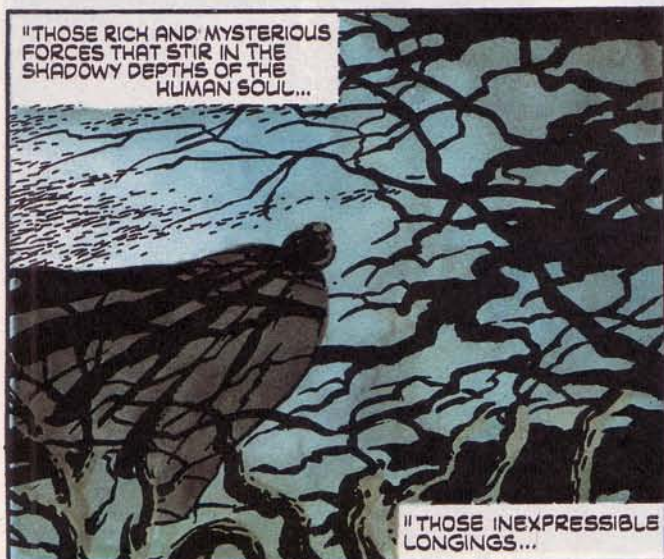
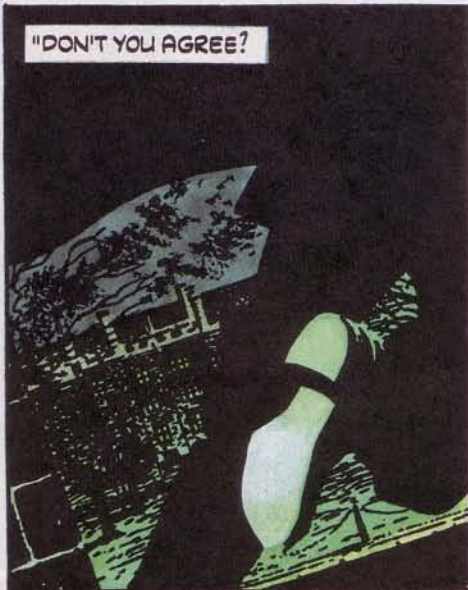
















"DEAR GOD..."



"THOU WHO HAS GRANTED US
REPIEVE FROM THY FINAL JUDG-
MENT, THOU WHO HAS PROVIDED
US WITH THAT MOST TERRIBLE
WARNING..."



"HELP US TO BE WORTHY OF
THY MERCY, AS WE WERE
WHEN THOU DIDST TURN
ASIDE THY WRATH..."

"THAT WRATH WHICH DID
RAIN FIRE FROM THE HEAVENS."



"HELP US TO RESIST THE
TEMPTATIONS OF THE EVIL ONE..."



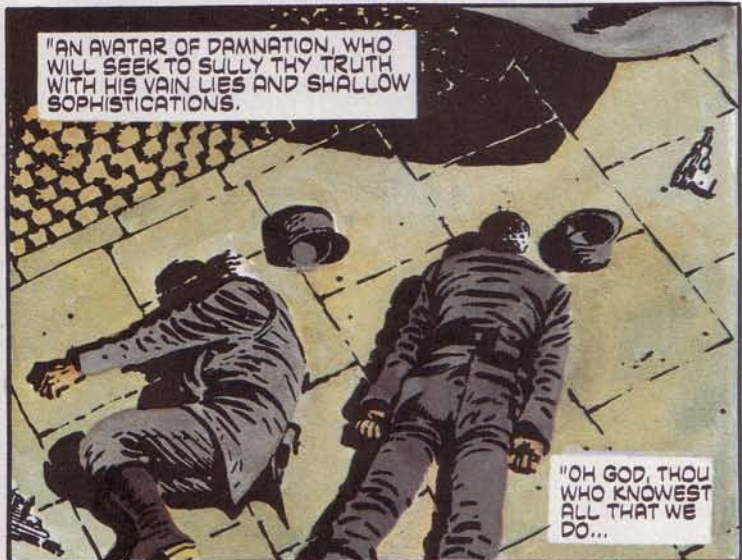
"WHO IS SURELY COME AMONGST
US IN THIS, THE HOUR OF OUR
GREATEST TRIAL."



"FOR I HAVE SEEN
A VISION..."



"A VISION OF DARK
AND SATANIC EVIL
THAT COMETH
FORTH FROM THE
NIGHT TO ENSNARE
THE WEAK AND
THE SINFUL..."



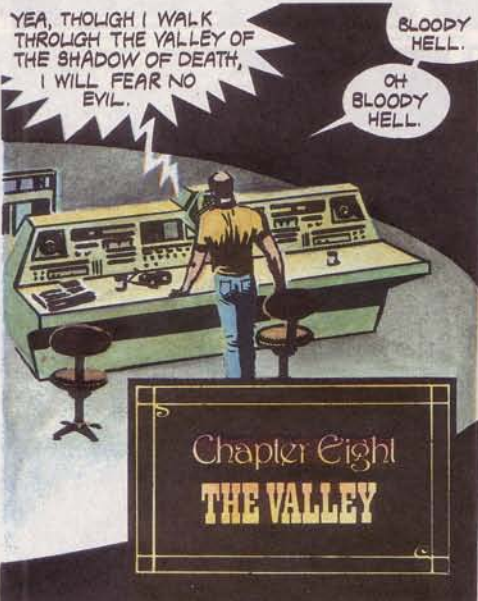
"AN AVATAR OF DAMNATION, WHO
WILL SEEK TO SULLY THY TRUTH
WITH HIS VAIN LIES AND SHALLOW
SOPHISTICATIONS."

"OH GOD, THOU
WHO KNOWEST
ALL THAT WE
DO..."





















THE NOSE, NEW SCOTLAND YARD.
DECEMBER 23RD, 1997.



THERE...

THE WOUND'S BEEN CLEANED
UP A LITTLE, ERIC, BUT YOU
CAN SEE THAT IT HAS A
FAIRLY RAGGED EDGE.

SO YOU'RE RIGHT, IT ISN'T A KNIFE
WOUND. IT LOOKS LIKE SOME-
THING'S BEEN PLINCHED
THROUGH THE SKIN WITH
INCREDIBLE FORCE.



HMM.

AHH, WELL, THANKS FOR
THE HELP, DELIA. ME AND
THE LAD ARE SITTING
UP WITH THIS CASE
TONIGHT. YOU'VE GIVEN
US SOMETHING ELSE
TO CHEW OVER.

SOUNDS
LIKE YOU'VE ALREADY
BITTEN OFF ENOUGH
TO RUIN YOUR CHRISTMAS.
DIDN'T DOMINIC TELL ME
THAT YOU WERE GOING TO
CONSULT FATE?



MM, THE LEADER'S
AUTHORIZED AN
EXTENSION LINK FOR
ME. THINGS MUST BE
DESPERATE. HE'S
USUALLY FUNNY
ABOUT OTHER
PEOPLE USING
FATE...



OOH, DELIA...
BEFORE I
FORGET...



CAN YOU TELL US ANY-
THING ABOUT THIS? WE
FOUND TWO OF THEM...
ONE IN THE CARRIAGE WHEN HE
GRABBED LEWIS
PROTHERO...

IT'S A
VIOLET CARSON.
I'D HEARD THAT STRAIN
HAD DIED SINCE THE WAR.
THOUGHT A BOTANIST MIGHT
BE ABLE TO SHED SOME
LIGHT ON IT...

THE OTHER IN
THE BISHOP'S
ROOM...



WHY... YES, YES OF
COURSE, I'M KNOCK-
ING OFF IN A
FEW MINUTES,
BUT...

PERHAPS
I COULD TAKE
IT HOME...

MAGIC.
SEE YOU TO-
MORROW THEN,
DELIA. 'BYE.



'BYE.



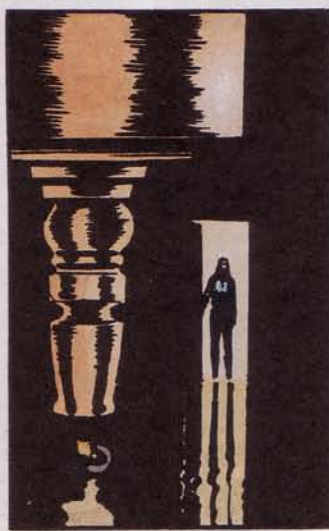
THE SHADOW GALLERY.

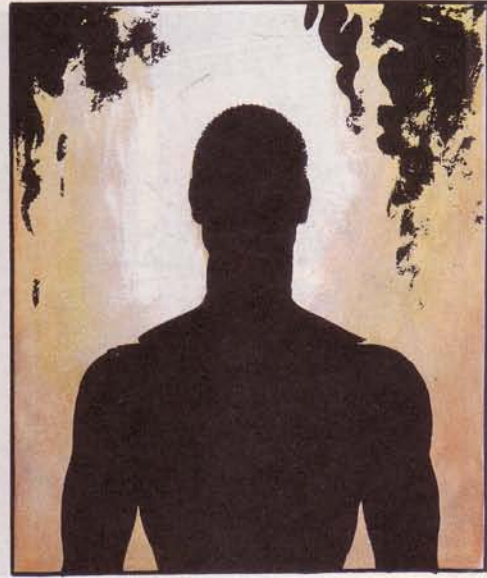
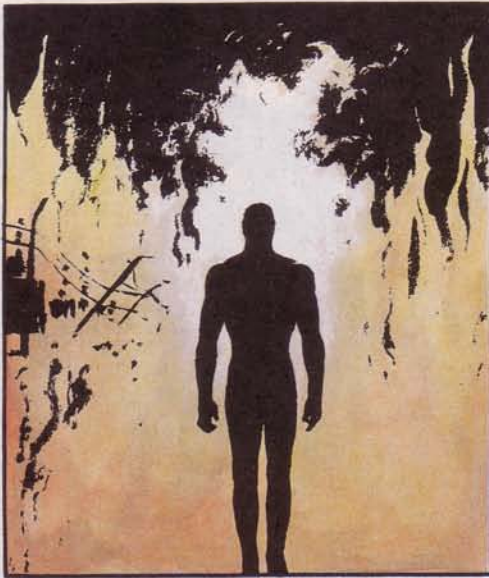






THE SHADOW GALLERY







THE SHADOW GALLERY. "LET'S DIG AN ENORMOUS CASTLE!" CRIED MOON-FACE. "THEN WE CAN ALL SIT ON THE TOP OF IT WHEN THE SEA COMES IN."

"YES," SAID SILKY. "BUT IT'S TIME WE WENT BACK TO THE FARAWAY TREE. THIS LAND WILL SOON BE MOVING ON-- AND NICE AS IT IS, WE DON'T WANT TO LIVE HERE FOREVER."

"WE CAN'T," SAID SILKY, SUDDENLY LOOKING SAD. "WHY NOT? WHY NOT?" CRIED JO IN SURPRISE. "ISN'T THIS THE LAND OF DO-AS-YOU-PLEASE?"

"GRACIOUS NO," SAID JO. "OUR MOTHER AND FATHER COULDN'T POSSIBLY DO WITHOUT US..."

THE NOSE.

...SO SAY THAT AGAIN, DOMINIC. YOU RAN A CHECK ON ALLOCATIONS OF ROOM NUMBERS AND...

...AND IT WAS THE RESETTLEMENT CAMPS. THEY WERE THE ONLY PLACES THAT NUMBERED ROOMS WITH ROMAN NUMERALS.

YOU SEE, YOU SAID THAT IT WAS THE 'Y' THING THAT WAS THE KEY TO IT ALL, AND LEWIS PROTHERO KEPT TALKING ABOUT "ROOM FIVE" AND IN ROMAN NUMERALS FIVE IS V, AND...

ER.. WELL, I MEAN, IT'S ONLY A SORT OF THEORY. I DON'T SUPPOSE IT MEANS ANYTHING...

IT'S BRILLIANT, DOMINIC. BRILLIANT...

NOW, LET'S FOLLOW THIS THROUGH ...LET'S SEE IF ANY OF THE TEN VICTIMS WERE AT ANY OF THE CAMPS... JUST A SEC. ... THERE!

REC/BEX - SIR 80 / 720

RESTRICTED DATA
ACCESS CODE 1

CODE - 382/299
LILLIMAN, REV. ANTHONY JAMES
LARKHILL RESETTLEMENT CAMP
(1997-1998)

CI CODE - 382/116
PROTHERO, LEWIS

LARKHILL

LILLIMAN?

THE BISHOP. BY CHRIST, LAD, I THINK YOU'VE CRACKED IT. I SUPPOSE IT COULD BE COINCIDENCE BUT IT'S THE BEST LEAD WE'VE HAD UP TO YET.

AND PROTHERO WAS AT LARKHILL TOO.

THERE MUST HAVE BEEN DOZENS OF MEN WORKING AT THAT CAMP WE CAN INTERVIEW THEM AND SEE WHAT ELSE COMES UP. FATE CAN GIVE US A LIST OF NAMES HANG ON...

BACK/STATE 2 CN DSK

REC/BEX - SIR 80 / 720

RESTRICTED DATA
ACCESS CODES (1-5)

FILE CODE - 382/006

BLAND, ADRIAN STEVEN
CONLEY, PAUL PETER
CROSS, DUNCAN
GRAYES, JOHN ANTHONY
GOSLING, JOHN LIONEL
IBONS, RICHARD

DECLARED 8.11.94 FILE CLOSED
DECLARED 24.3.94 FILE CLOSED
DECLARED 18.5.95 FILE CLOSED
DECLARED 23.12.95 FILE CLOSED
DECLARED 14.7.96 FILE CLOSED
DECLARED 23.12.96 FILE CLOSED

BACK/STATE 3 CN DSK

REC/BEX - SIR 80 / 720

DECLARED 15.7.95 FILE CLOSED
DECLARED 23.12.95 FILE CLOSED
DECLARED 28.12.97 FILE CURRENTLY
DECLARED 1.4.97 FILE CLOSED

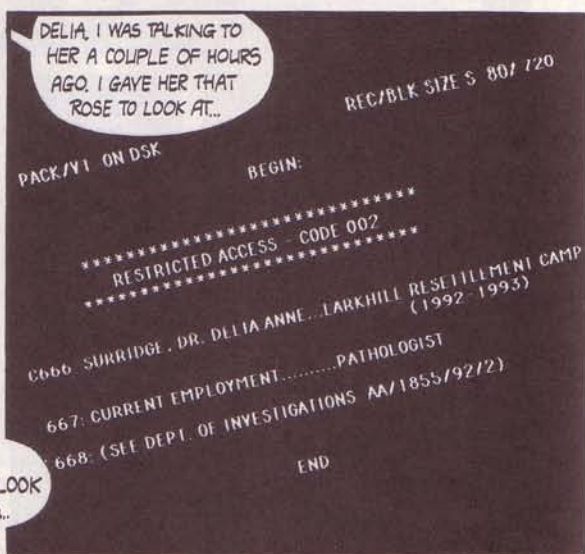
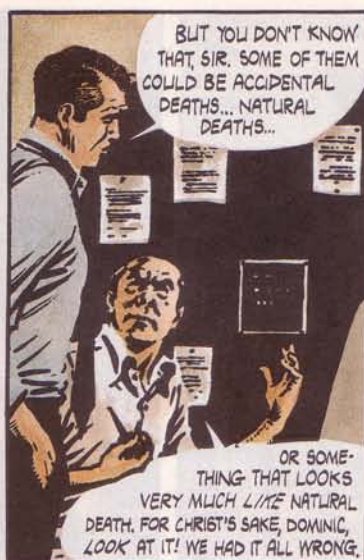
JONES, RAYMOND PAUL
JONES, MICHAEL DIANE
LILLIMAN, REV. ANTHONY JAMES
MALPAS, KENNETH DAVID

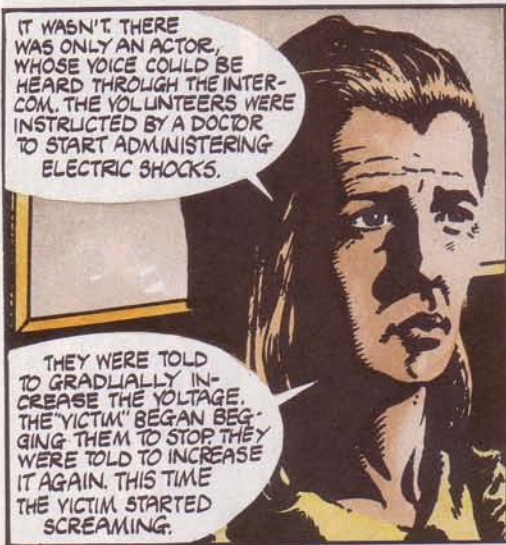
OH HELL...

DECEASED...DECEASED...
DECEASED. THEY'RE DEAD,
DOMINIC, ALL DEAD.



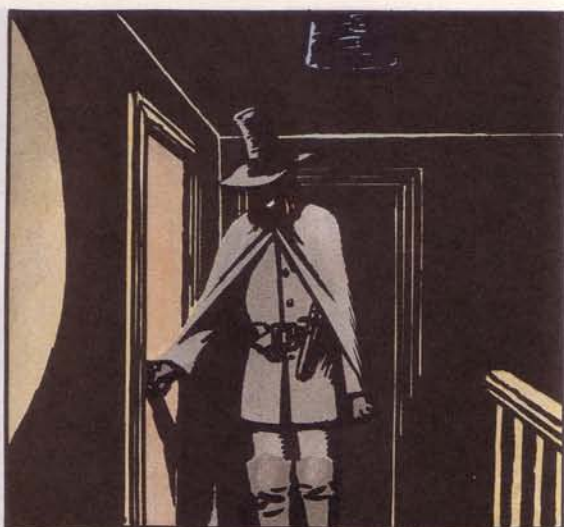


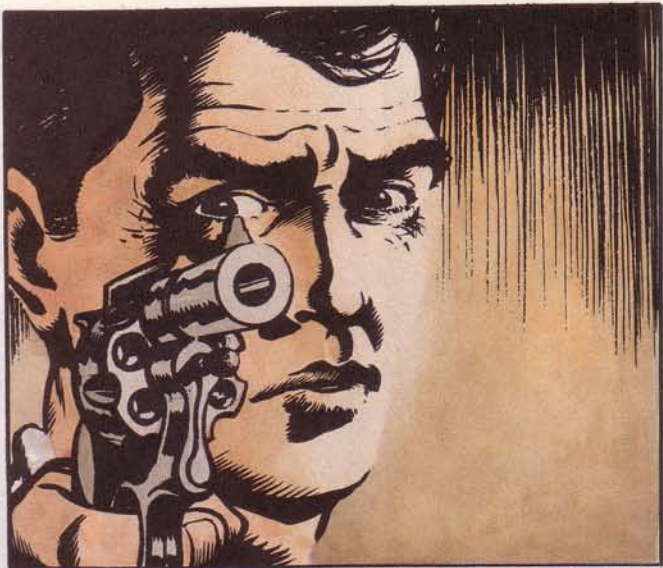




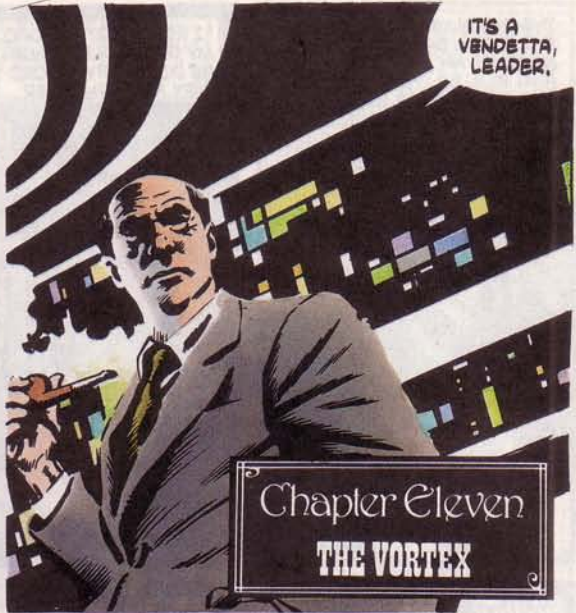












I'VE TAKEN KEY EXCERPTS FROM THE DIARY, BALANCED THEM AGAINST MY OWN FINDINGS AND PLACED THEM IN ORDER. THE STORY THAT EMERGES IS, FRANKLY, INCREDIBLE...



IT BEGINS ON APRIL 30TH, 1993. I'LL READ IT TO YOU.

"I ARRIVED AT LARKHILL THIS MORNING. MY DRIVER WAS A MAN NAMED GOSLING. HE DIDN'T SAY A WORD TO ME ALL THE WAY FROM ANDOVER."



"GOD, THIS PLACE IS MISERABLE."

"I MET COMMANDER PROTHERO, WHO I'M AFRAID I FIND RATHER VULGAR AND UNPLEASANT. HE PROMISED TO SHOW ME MY RESEARCH STOCK ONCE I'D SETTLED IN, AND DID SO THIS AFTERNOON."



"THEY'RE A POOR BUNCH. PROTHERO TELLS ME THAT THEIR HABITS ARE FILTHY. NONE OF THEM WILL BE ANY USE TO ME IF I DON'T GET TO WORK ON THEM SOON."

"MAY 17TH: ALMOST FINISHED THE FINAL DRAFT OF THE SCHEDULES FOR MY PROJECT. VERY EXCITED ABOUT IT SO FAR."

"HORMONE RESEARCH IS ALMOST USELESS WHEN RATS OR RABBITS ARE USED, AND THIS IS A HEAVEN-SENT OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN SOMETHING POSITIVE. I START NEXT WEEK. ALL BEING WELL."



"MAY 23RD: PROTHERO HAS PICKED THE SUBJECTS... FOUR DOZEN OF THEM. AND I'VE GOT TO INSPECT THEM THIS AFTERNOON. THEY'RE SO WEAK AND PATHETIC YOU FIND YOURSELF HATING THEM."



"THEY DON'T FIGHT OR STRUGGLE AGAINST DEATH. THEY JUST STARE AT YOU WITH WEAK EYES. THEY MAKE ME WANT TO BE SICK, PHYSICALLY. THEY'RE HARDLY HUMAN."

"JUNE 5TH: WELL, WE DID IT. ALL FOUR DOZEN OF THEM. GOT A SHOT OF BATCH 5, WHICH IS THE PITURAZIN/PINEARIN MIXTURE. IT'S TOO EARLY FOR ANY RESULTS YET, REALLY."



"THAT CREEPY PADRE, TONY LILLIMAN, INSISTED ON BEING THERE WHILE IT WAS DONE TO LEND SPIRITUAL SUPPORT. HE RUBS HIS HANDS TOGETHER AND STARES AT MY CHEST. I HATE HIM."

"JUNE THE NINTH."

"OF THE ORIGINAL FOUR DOZEN, OVER SEVENTY-FIVE PERCENT ARE DEAD NOW."



"OUT OF THE TEN THAT ARE LEFT, I DOUBT THAT THREE WILL SURVIVE THE NIGHT. ONE OF THE BLACKS, DONALD CRANE, IS IN PARTICULARLY BAD CONDITION."



"HE IS DELIRIOUS ALL THE TIME, AND IMAGINES HE IS IN TRENCHTOWN, JAMAICA. HE HAS STARTED TO DEVELOP FOUR EXTRA NIPPLES, AND HIS GENERATIVE ORGANS HAVE ATROPHIED."

"STRANGELY, THERE ARE NO CLEAR PATTERNS EMERGING AS TO WHICH GROUP SUCCEEDS QUICKEST. IF ANYTHING, THE WOMEN ARE SLIGHTLY MORE RESISTANT THAN THE MEN, ESPECIALLY THE BLACK WOMEN."



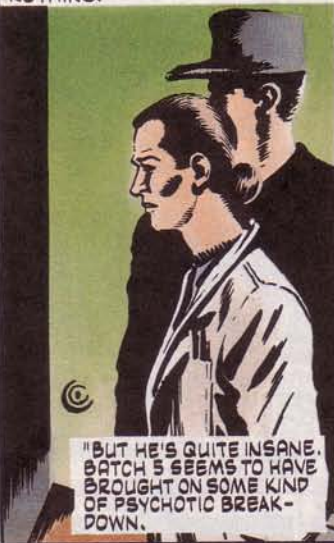
"RITA BOYD, THE LESBIAN, DIED AT TEA-TIME. DURING THE AUTOPSY WE FOUND FOUR TINY VESTIGIAL FINGERS FORMING WITHIN THE CALF OF HER LEG."

"JUNE 18TH: ONLY FIVE LEFT NOW. TWO MEN AND THREE WOMEN, WHICH TENDS TO CONTRADICT MY ENTRY OF THE 9TH OF JUNE. WE'VE HOUSED THEM IN INDIVIDUAL CUBICLES AT THE MEDICAL BLOCK.



"THE MAN IN ROOM 5 IS A REALLY FASCINATING CASE.

"PHYSICALLY, THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE ANYTHING WRONG WITH HIM. NO CELLULAR ANOMALIES, NOTHING.



"BUT HE'S QUITE INSANE. BATCH 5 SEEMS TO HAVE BROUGHT ON SOME KIND OF PSYCHOTIC BREAK-DOWN.

"STRANGELY, HE'S DEVELOPED ONE OF THOSE CURIOUS SIDE EFFECTS WHICH SEEM TO AFFLICT CERTAIN CATEGORIES OF SCHIZOPHRENIC:



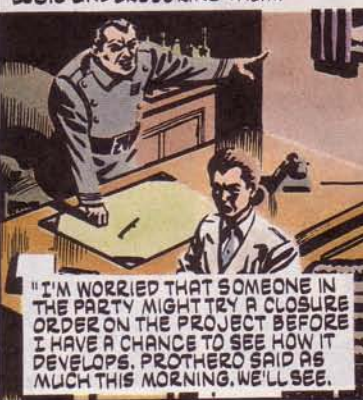
"HIS PERSONALITY HAS BECOME TOTALLY MAGNETIC. HE SAYS VERY LITTLE... BUT THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THE WAY HE LOOKS AT YOU.

"HE LOOKED AT ME TODAY AS IF I WERE SOME SORT OF INSECT. HE LOOKED AT ME AS IF HE FELT SORRY FOR ME.



"HIS FACE IS VERY UGLY. I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT IT ALL EVENING.

"I THINK HIS BEHAVIOR PATTERNS ARE WHAT INTEREST ME. THEY'RE UTTERLY IRRATIONAL, BUT THEY SEEM TO HAVE A CERTAIN DERANGED LOGIC UNDERSCORING THEM.



"I'M WORRIED THAT SOMEONE IN THE PARTY MIGHT TRY A CLOSURE ORDER ON THE PROJECT BEFORE I HAVE A CHANCE TO SEE HOW IT DEVELOPS. PROTHERO SAID AS MUCH THIS MORNING. WE'LL SEE.

"JULY 12TH: PATEL, THE ASIAN IN CUBICLE THREE, DIED TODAY. HIS LIVER HAD CEASED FUNCTIONING. HAVEN'T HAD A CHANCE TO OPEN HIM UP AND FIND OUT WHY.



"I'VE BEEN SPENDING A LOT OF TIME STUDYING ROOM 5 AGAIN, I'M AFRAID.

"I'M GLAD WE LET HIM HAVE A GO AT THE GARDENING PROJECT. PROTHERO WAS RELUCTANT AT FIRST. I SUPPOSE IT'S BECAUSE WITH THE FOOD SHORTAGE, THESE PLACES HAVE TO BE SELF-SUPPORTING.



"HE'S DELIGHTED NOW. THE FAT TOAD. ROOM FIVE'S TURNED OUT TO BE A GENIUS AT GARDENING.

"HE'S SORTED OUT THE WHITEFLY AND IT LOOKS LIKE BEING A GOOD YIELD.

"AUG 7TH: THE CROP PRODUCTION HAS ALMOST DOUBLED. PROTHERO'S LETTING ROOM FIVE ORDER SOME GARDEN SUPPLIES AND HE'S EVEN GIVEN HIM A PATCH TO GROW FLOWERS ON.



"HE GROWS ROSES. BEAUTIFUL ROSES. THE WOMAN IN ROOM ONE DIED THIS MORNING. THE SKIN ON HER FACE AND NECK WAS LIKE POLYTHENE.

"SEPTEMBER 16TH. GARDEN DOESN'T REQUIRE MUCH WORK THIS TIME OF YEAR. ROOM FIVE WANTS TO HELP WITH THE DECORATING IN THE STAFF QUARTERS.



"PROTHERO WILL TAKE SOME PERSUADING. HE'S STILL A LITTLE DISTURBED BY WHAT FIVE DID WITH THE AMMONIA-BASED FERTILISER THAT HE ORDERED.

"IT'S ARRANGED IN PILES AROUND HIS CELL. IT MAKES A KIND OF GEOMETRIC SHAPE. HE SITS MOTIONLESS FOR HOURS IN THE CENTRE OF IT. THE AMMONIA STENCH IS TERRIBLE.



"SEPTEMBER 29TH: PROTHERO ON MY BACK ABOUT FIVE'S GREASE SOLVENT. HE ORDERS FOURTEEN GALLONS OF IT AND THEN SWIPES HALF TO DECORATE HIS CELL. PROTHERO PICKS HIS NOSE.



"THE PATTERNS OF SOLVENT AND FERTILISER ON THE FLOOR OF FIVE'S CUBICLE ARE BECOMING SO INTRICATE. I'VE GOT TO FOLLOW THIS OBSESSION TO THE END. IT MIGHT BE A NEW SYNDROME.

"NOV. 5TH: HIS CUBICLE IS COVERED WITH SO MUCH JUNK. THE AMMONIA SMELLS TERRIBLE AND THERE IS A SORT OF SWIMMING POOL SMELL TOO. LORD KNOWS WHERE THAT COMES FROM.



"I'M SURE THAT IN HIS MIND ALL THIS MAKES PERFECT SENSE. I'M SURE OF IT."

THE NEXT ENTRY I WANT TO READ WAS MADE ON DECEMBER 24TH, 1993, AND IT REFERS TO THE EVENTS OF THE PREVIOUS DAY.

IT STARTS WITH THE WORDS "HE LOOKED AT," WHICH ARE CROSSED OUT. THEN IT SAYS "NO, CAN'T WRITE ABOUT IT YET. CAN'T HOLD..." AND THEN ANOTHER GAP.

WHEN IT RESUMES, IT'S IN A DIFFERENT COLORED INK...



"I WAS IN THE MESS. IT WAS ABOUT HALF PAST TEN WHEN WE HEARD THE FIRST EXPLOSION.



"WE RAN TO THE DOOR TO SEE. LUCKILY, I WAS RIGHT AT THE BACK.

"THE ONES AT THE FRONT RAN STRAIGHT INTO THE GAS. IT WAS HORRIBLE.



"A FEW OF US WENT OUT THROUGH THE REAR DOOR TO AVOID THE GAS. YOU COULD HEAR PEOPLE SCREAMING EVERYWHERE.



"MEN SCREAMING. I HATE THAT. I HATE THE SOUND OF MEN SCREAMING.

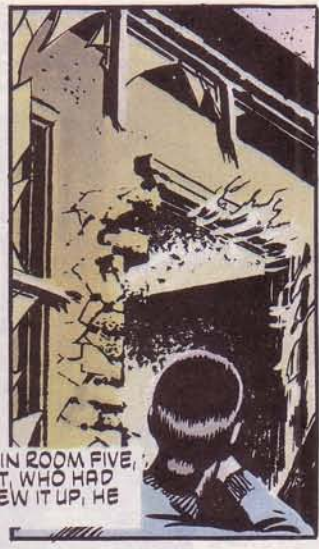




"IN THE CENTRE OF THE CAMP, EVERYTHING WAS ON FIRE. WHILE WE WERE TRYING TO WORK OUT WHAT WAS GOING ON, THE OVENS EXPLODED.



"I RAN, BUT EVERYONE WAS RUNNING, AND ALL IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS. IT WAS HORRIBLE.



"IT WAS THE MAN IN ROOM FIVE, WHO HAD GOT OUT, WHO HAD GOT AWAY, HE BLEW IT UP, HE KILLED ...



"I COULDN'T HAVE KNOWN... THE AMMONIA, THE GREASE SOLVENT AND ALL THE OTHER STUFF, HE'D BEEN MAKING THINGS WITH THEM.



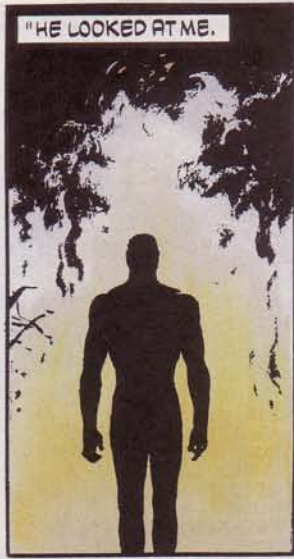
"MUSTARD GAS ...



"...AND NAPALM.



"AND IN THE YARD, I SAW HIM. HE HAD THE FLAMES BEHIND HIM. HE WAS NAKED ...

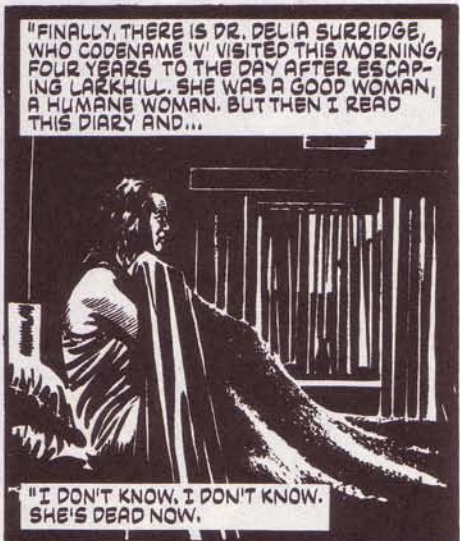


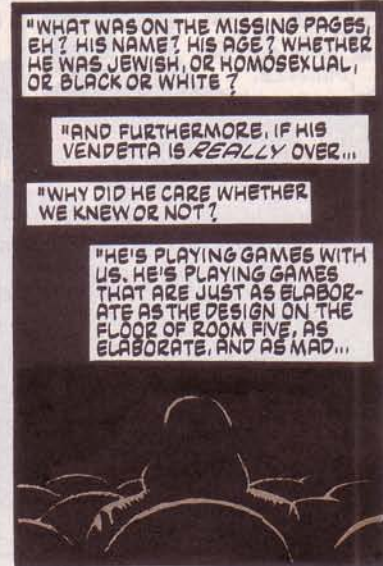
"HE LOOKED AT ME.



"AS IF I WERE AN INSECT, OH GOD. AS IF I WERE SOMETHING MOUNTED ON A SLIDE.

"HE LOOKED AT ME.







"... AND AS DEADLY."



YOU SEE, YOU DEAL WITH SOMETHING LIKE THIS... A SCHEME THAT'S AS INGENUOUS AS IT IS IRRATIONAL AND IT'S LIKE WALKING ON QUICK-SAND. YOU GET SLOWLY SUCKED INTO IT...

I MEAN, FATE DOESN'T HAVE ANY RECORDS OF WHAT HAPPENED AT LARKHILL. WE DIDN'T KEEP RECORDS OF WHAT WENT ON AT ANY OF THE CAMPS. I SUPPOSE WE WERE BEING CAUTIOUS.



BUT LOOK... FOR ALL WE KNOW, THIS DIARY COULD BE A COMPLETE AND UTTER FAKE. CODENAME "V" COULD HAVE WRITTEN IT HIMSELF.

HE MIGHT NEVER HAVE BEEN AT LARKHILL AT ALL. DO YOU SEE? IT COULD ALL BE ANOTHER SMOKE-SCREEN, A FALSE TRAIL, ANOTHER COVER STORY...



MR. FINCH, CAN YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THAT ANY-ONE WOULD KILL OVER FIFTY PEOPLE FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN TO PROVIDE HIMSELF WITH A COVER STORY?

THE VERY IDEA IS...



... MADNESS.



AH YES.

I SEE...



VERY WELL, I THINK THAT WILL BE ALL, MR. FINCH. ENGLAND PREVAILS.



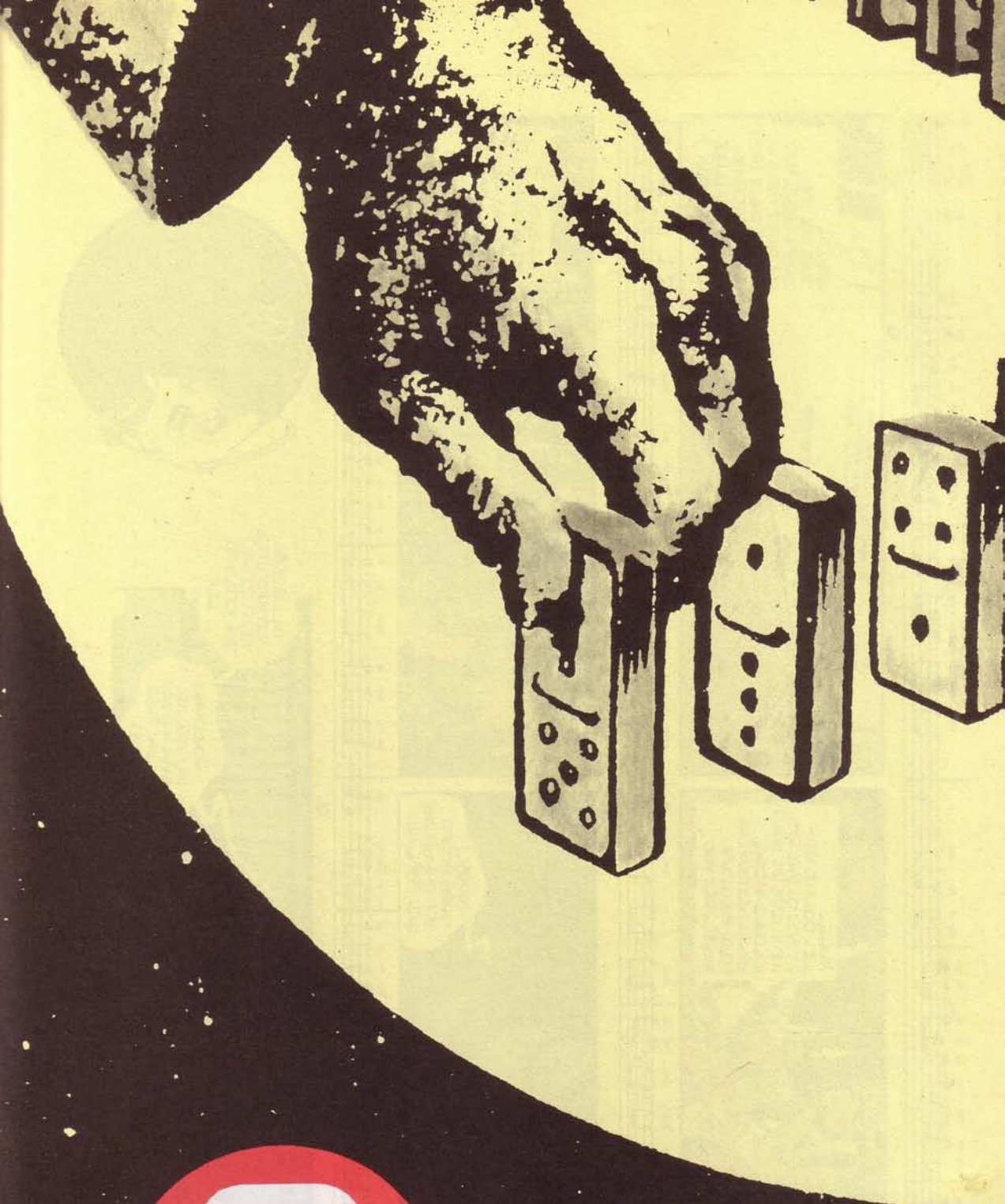
OH, AND MR. FINCH?

LEADER?



HAPPY CHRISTMAS.





THIS VICIOUS CABARET



THEY SAY THAT THERE'S A BROKEN LIGHT FOR EVERY HEART ON BROADWAY.

THEY SAY THAT LIFE'S A GAME AND THEN THEY TAKE THE BOARD AWAY.

THEY GIVE YOU MASKS AND COSTUMES AND AN OUTLINE OF THE STORY.

Then we hear there's a broken light for every heart on Broadway. Then we hear there's a game and then they take the board away. Then we hear there's a broken light for every heart on Broadway. Then we hear there's a game and then they take the board away. Then we hear there's a broken light for every heart on Broadway. Then we hear there's a game and then they take the board away.

"IN NO LONGER PRETTY CITIES THERE ARE FINGERS IN THE KITTIES. THERE ARE WARRANTS, FORMS AND CHITTIES AND A JACK BOOT ON THE STAIR."

THEN LEAVE YOU ALL TO IMPROVISE THEIR VICIOUS CABARET.

There's sex and death and human grime in monochrome for one thin dime and at least the trains all run on time but they don't go any- where. Facing their responsibilities either on their backs or on their knees there are ladies who just simply freeze and dare not turn away.

Dear Mrs Almond,
We regret to inform you that you are not eligible for the receipt of Benefit under the State Employees Pension Scheme. We refer you to sub-clause 15(c) of the 1995 Benefit Agreement. Should you have any queries regarding this decision.

"THERE'S SEX AND DEATH AND HUMAN GRIME IN MONOCHROME FOR ONE THIN DIME AND AT LEAST THE TRAINS ALL RUN ON TIME BUT THEY DON'T GO ANY- WHERE."

Facing their responsibilities either on their backs or on their knees there are ladies who just simply freeze and dare not turn away.

ladies who just simply freeze and sway
turn a-
way

"AND THE WIDOWS WHO REFUSE TO CRY WILL BE DRESSED IN GARTER AND BOW-TIE AND BE TAUGHT TO KICK THEIR LEGS UP HIGH IN THIS VICIOUS GABARET."

add the willow with fi-
ture to cry
will be
through it
gutter
add how be
and be

"AT LAST THE 1998 SHOW! THE BALLET ON THE BURNING STAGE! THE DOCUMENTARY SEEN UPON THE FRACTURED SCREEN!"

**THERE'S A POLICE-
MAN WITH AN HONEST
SOUL THAT HAS SEEN
WHOSE HEAD IS ON
THE POLE AND HE
GRUNTS AND FILLS
HIS BRIAR BOWL WITH
A FEELING OF UNEASE **

*THE DREADFUL
POEM SCRAWLED
UPON THE CRUMPL-
ED PAGE!*

piano with an honest soul who's
 There's a
 "WHILE HIS MASTER
 IN THE DARK NEARBY
 INSPECTS THE HANDS
 WITH BRUTAL EYE
 THAT HAVE NEVER
 BRUSHED A LOVER'S
 THIGH BUT HAVE
 SQUEEZED A
 NATION'S THROAT..."

"THEN HE BRISKLY
 FRISKS THE TORN
 REMAINS FOR A
 FINGERPRINT OR
 CRIMSON SWAINS
 AND ENDEAVOURS
 TO IGNORE THE
 CHAINS THAT HE
 WALKS IN TO
 HIS KNEES"

The
 on the
 beyond
 green
 The
 dreadful
 for an
 up-
 at the
 tangled
 page

sees whose head is on the pole and he
 grants as he fills his brain bowl with a
 looking of us - now
 Thus he be
 lordly holds the turn it means
 for i
 finger print or crimson stain and ex-

demons to fight near the chains that he walks in to his lovers while his master in the dark near by is... spect the hands with brutal eye that have never landed a lover's sigh but here

"AND HE HUNGERS IN HIS SECRET DREAMS FOR THE HARSH EMBRACE OF CRUEL MACHINES. BUT HIS LOVER IS NOT WHAT SHE SEEMS, AND SHE WILL NOT LEAVE A NOTE"

"AT LAST THE 1998 SHOW! THE SITUATION TRAGEDY! GRAND OPERA SLICK WITH SOAPY CLIFF-HANGERS WITH NO HOPE!"

separated a mother's friend

hunger is his secret dream for the harsh embrace of cruel machines

lover is not what she seems and she

"THE WATER COLOUR IN THE FLOODED GALLERY"

will not leave a note At last but the shadows nearly right about The girl is a... but she

"THERE'S A GIRL WHO'LL PUSH BUT WILL NOT MOOVE AND SHE'S DESPERATE FOR HER FATHER'S LOVE. SHE BELIEVES THE HAND BENEATH THE GLOVE MAY BE ONE SHE NEEDS TO HOLD"

"THOUGH SHE DOUBTS HER HOST'S MORALITIES SHE DECIDES THAT SHE IS MORE AT EASE IN THE LAND OF DOING AS-YOU-PLEASE THAN OUTSIDE IN THE COLD."

Grand opera slick with soap Old The water colour is the

huddled gather y

There's a girl who'll push but will not move and she's desperate for her father's love She he-

But the backdrops peel and the sets give way and the cast get eaten by the play. There's a murderer at the matinee there are dead men in the aisles.

...BUT THE FROZEN MASK JUST SMILES.

AND THE PATRONS AND THE ACTORS TOO ARE UNCERTAIN IF THE SHOW IS THROUGH, AND WITH SIDELONG LOOKS AWAIT THEIR CLUE....

...BUT THE FROZEN MASK JUST SMILES.

backdrops peel and the sets give way and the cast get eaten by the play.

"AT LAST THE 1998 SHOW! THE TORCH-SONG NO-ONE EVER SINGS! THE CURFEW CHORUS LINE! THE COMEDY DIVINE!"

"THE BULGING EYES OF PUPPETS, STRANGLING BY THEIR STRINGS!"

There's thrills and chills and girls galore, there's sing-songs and surprises! There's something here for everyone, reserve your seat today!

There's mischiefs and malarkeys...

There's mischiefs and malarkeys...

...BUT NO QUEERS.

The backdrops peel and the sets give way and the cast get eaten by the play. There's a murderer at the matinee there are dead men in the aisles.

...BUT THE FROZEN MASK JUST SMILES.

AND THE PATRONS AND THE ACTORS TOO ARE UNCERTAIN IF THE SHOW IS THROUGH, AND WITH SIDELONG LOOKS AWAIT THEIR CLUE....

...BUT THE FROZEN MASK JUST SMILES.

Voice

There's little and dolls and girls' place. There's sing songs and surpri- and There's something here for ev'ry- one, it- is- day! There's

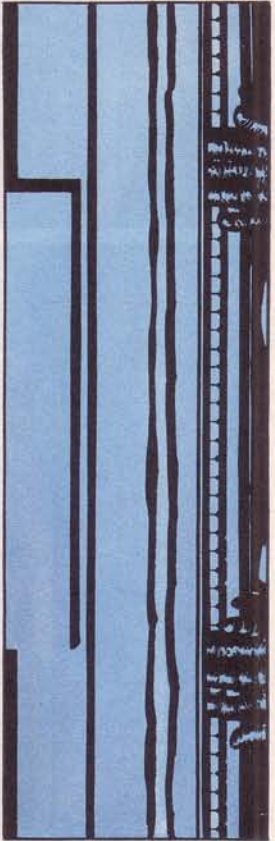
OR YIDS...

WITHIN THIS BASTARDS CARNIVAL-

Voice

mad- like, but in querns or yids or dukes, and- is this heart's carnival, this vicom a- la- net

THIS VICIOUS CABARET!



END OF PRELUDE

JANUARY 5TH, 1998. THE
SHADOW GALLERY...



AS YOU SEE, MY
HANDS ARE
QUITE
EMPTY...



CONCEALING
NOTHING...

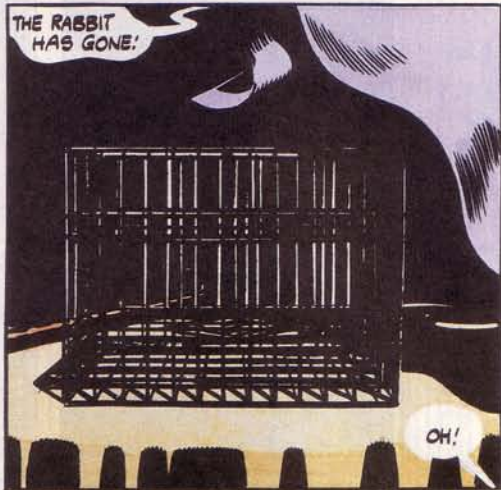


...NOR HAVE I ANY-
THING UP MY
SLEEVE.

AND YET, WITH
THE MEREST FLICK
OF MY WRIST...



THE RABBIT
HAS GONE!



OH!

BRING HER
BACK!

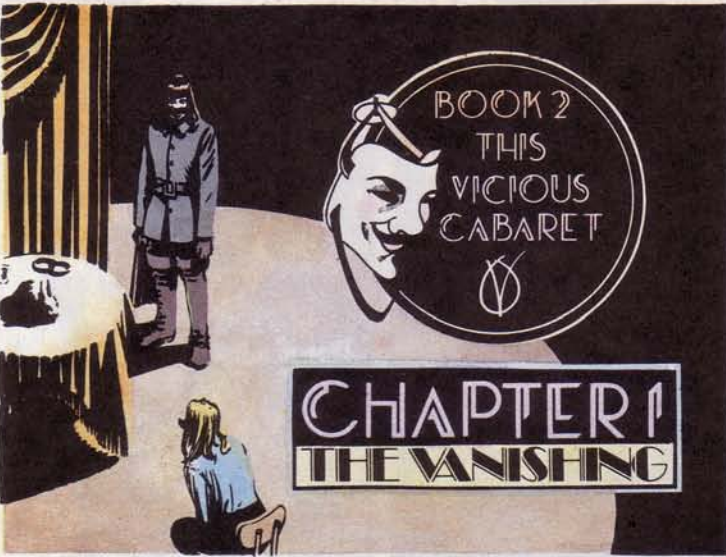


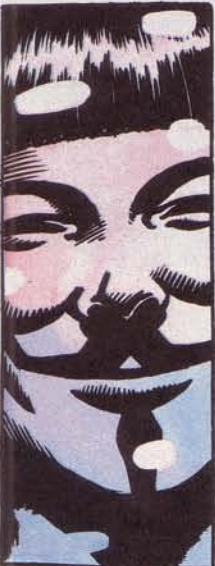
BRING HER BACK?
BUT WHAT IF SHE IS
CONTENT WHERE SHE
IS? DO WE HAVE THE
RIGHT TO DISTURB
HER?

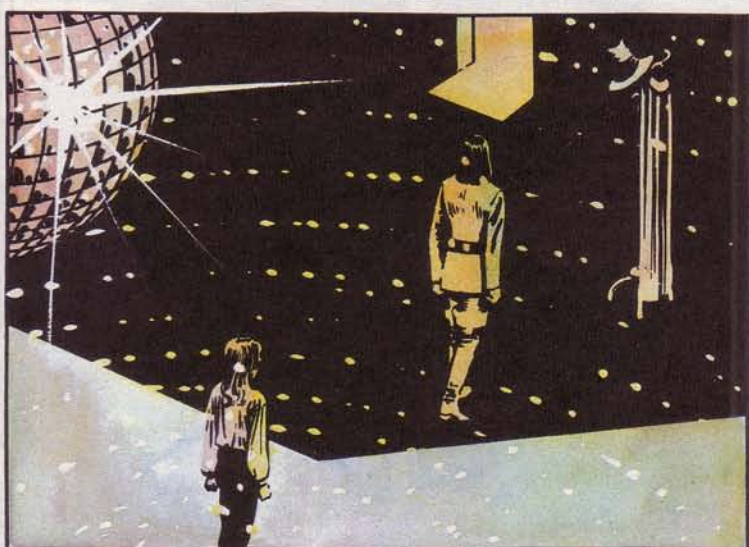


AHH... BUT I SEE YOU
HAVE ALREADY MADE
UP YOUR MIND VERY
WELL. WE REPLACE
THE CLOTH... LIKE SO...
AND WHEN NEXT
WE WHISK IT
AWAY...

















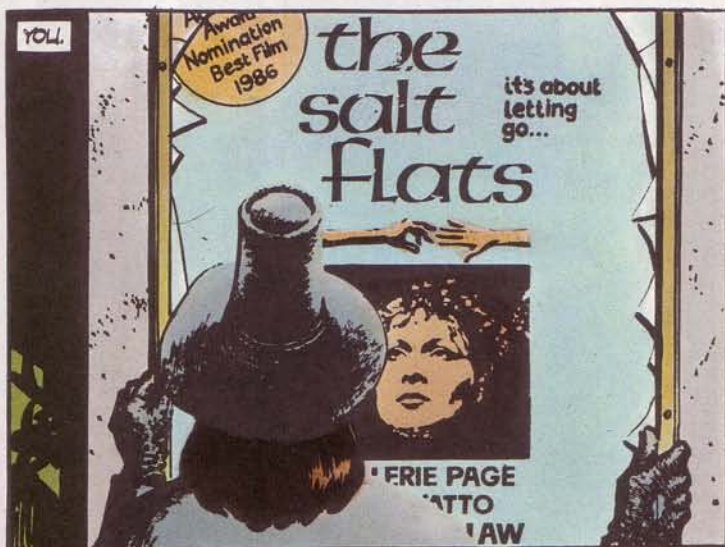
CHAPTER 2

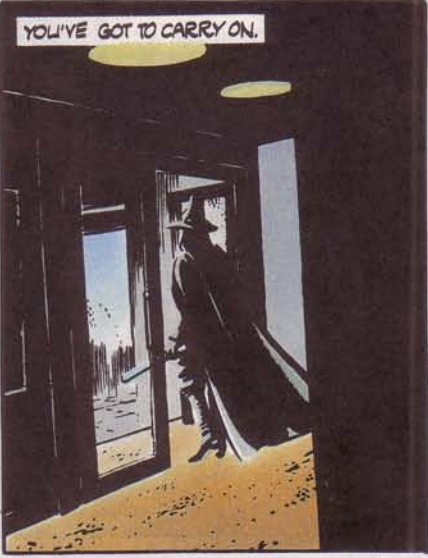
THE VEIL







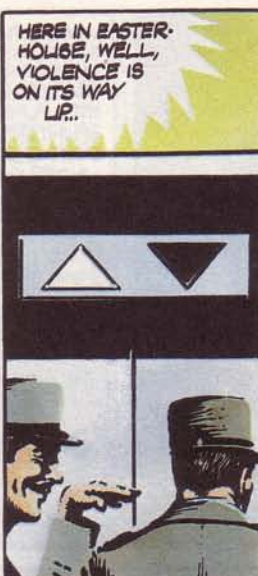
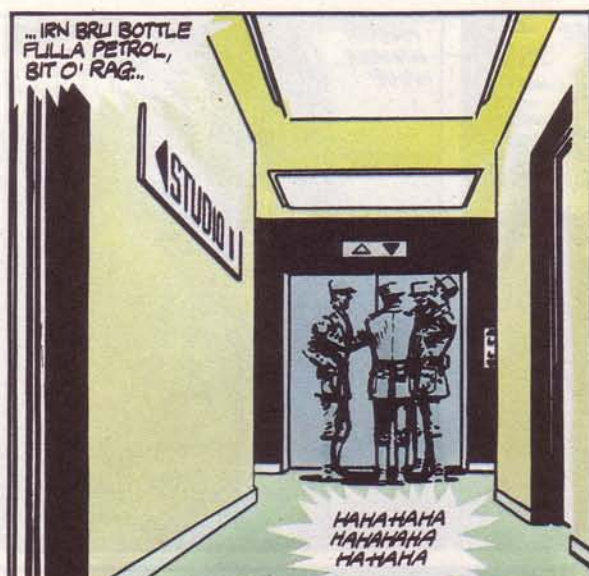
















HAHAHAHA
HAHAHAHAHA
HAHAHAHA
HAHAHA!



...AND NOW ON TWO
IT'S TIME FOR A
CHANGE OF
FACE...



AS WE GO OVER TO
DOCK GREEN FOR
ANOTHER EPISODE
OF THE CLASSIC POLICE
SERIES STARRING
JACK WARNER.

EVENIN',
ALL.



CRIME. IT'S AN
UGLY WORD, EVEN
HERE IN DOCK
GREEN...

...AND ESPECIALLY
WHEN IT INVOLVES
INNOCENT PEOPLE
LIKE YOU OR I.



TONIGHT I'M GOING TO
TELL YOU THE STORY OF
HARRY BISHOP WHO
FOUNDED OUT JUST
HOW UGLY CRIME
CAN BE...

...THE
HARD
WAY!



IT ALL BEGAN WITH
SOMETHING MY SON-IN-
LAW, ANDY, SAID TO ME OVER
DINNER...

GET
'EM OFF!

BEG YOUR
PARDON, MR.
GLOYER?



YOUR SHOPPING
BAGS! GET 'EM OFF
MY DESK!

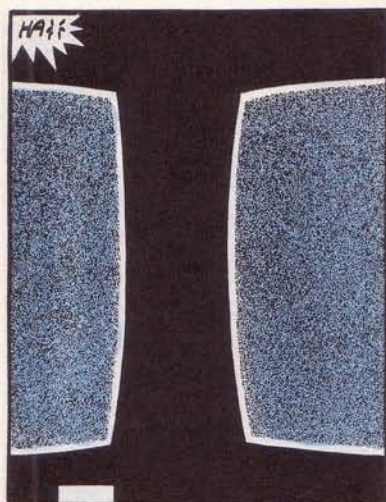
GEORGE,
I'M WORRIED
ABOUT
LAUDER-
DALE...

OLD LORDY?
WHY? WHAT'S THE
MATTER, ANDY?

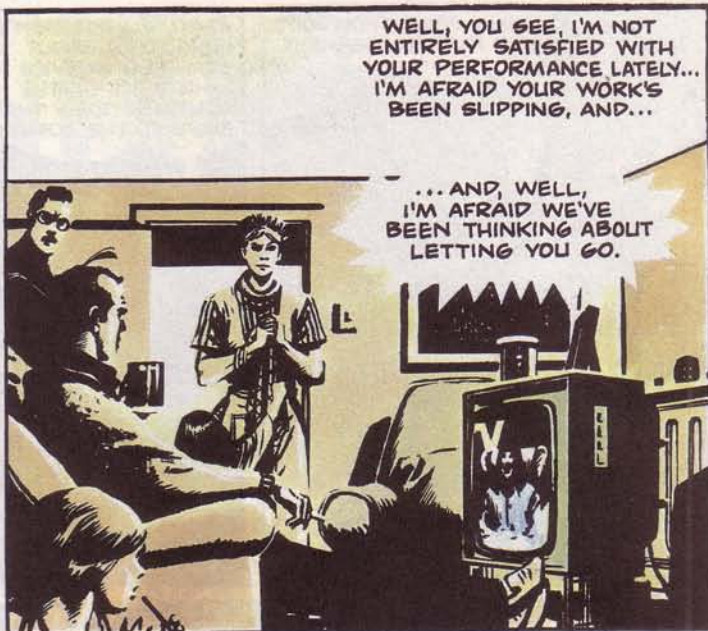


I DUNNO, GEORGE
...HE'S, WELL...
DIFFERENT.

OH DEAR,
MR. GLOYER!!
NOW MY MELONS
ARE FALLING OUT!



FEBRUARY 23RD, 1998: PEAK TIME.





AND, I MIGHT ADD, IN YOUR GENERAL STANDARD OF BEHAVIOUR.



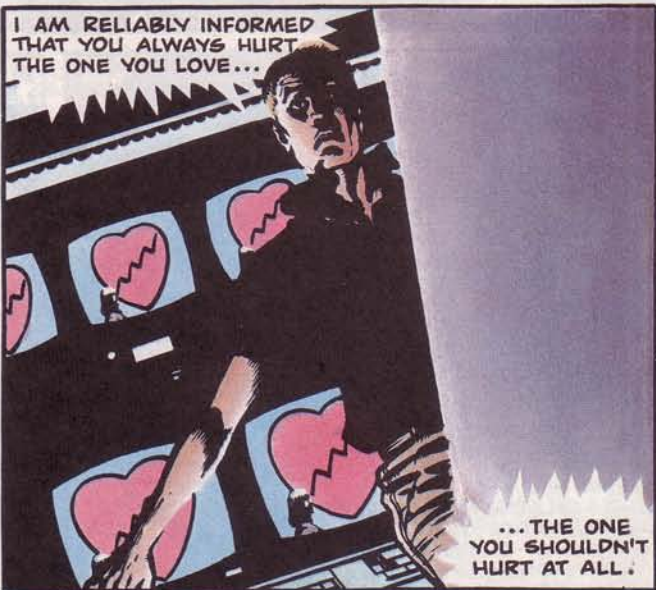
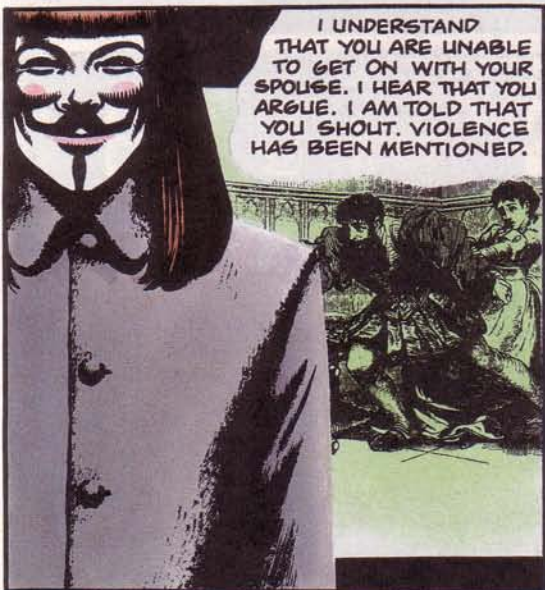
THE CONSTANT BICKERING ON THE FACTORY FLOOR HAS NOT ESCAPED MY ATTENTION...



HMM. WELL, I DIDN'T REALLY WANT TO HAVE TO BRING THIS UP, BUT...



NO, NEVER YOU MIND WHO TOLD ME. NO NAMES, NO PACK DRILL...



...THE ONE YOU SHOULDN'T HURT AT ALL.



IT WAS YOU! YOU WHO APPOINTED THESE PEOPLE! YOU WHO GAVE THEM THE POWER TO MAKE YOUR DECISIONS FOR YOU!

WHILE I'LL ADMIT THAT ANYONE CAN MAKE A MISTAKE ONCE, TO GO ON MAKING THE SAME LETHAL ERRORS CENTURY AFTER CENTURY SEEMS TO ME NOTHING SHORT OF DELIBERATE.

YOU HAVE ENCOURAGED THESE MALICIOUS INCOMPETENTS, WHO HAVE MADE YOUR WORKING LIFE A SHAMBLES.

YOU HAVE ACCEPTED WITHOUT QUESTION THEIR SENSELESS ORDERS.

YOU HAVE ALLOWED THEM TO FILL YOUR WORKSPACE WITH DANGEROUS AND UNPROVEN MACHINES.

YOU COULD HAVE STOPPED THEM.

ALL YOU HAD TO SAY WAS "NO." YOU HAVE NO SPINE. YOU HAVE NO PRIDE.

I WILL, HOWEVER, BE GENEROUS.

YOU ARE NO LONGER AN ASSET TO THE COMPANY.

YOU WILL BE GRANTED TWO YEARS TO SHOW ME SOME IMPROVEMENT IN YOUR WORK. IF AT THE END OF THAT TIME YOU ARE STILL UNWILLING TO MAKE A GO OF IT...





YOU HEARD WHAT HE DID? BLOODY INGENIOUS. BREAKS INTO JORDAN TOWER, HOLDS DASCOMBE AND HIS CREW AT DETONATOR POINT AND MAKES 'EM BROADCAST HIS VIDEO.

MADE DASCOMBE SEAL OFF THE BUILDING WITH HIS DESK-CONSOLE.

HE KNEW THE TRANSMITTER WAS INSIDE THE TOWER. MUST'VE. WITH THE BUILDING SEALED OFF, HE KNEW WE COULDN'T GET IN AND PULL THE PLUG ON HIM STRAIGHT AWAY.

BLOODY INGENIOUS.

'COURSE, HE COULDN'T GET OUT, EITHER.

HE'D SENT EVERYONE BUT DASCOMBE OUT OF THE CONTROL ROOM JUST BEFORE WE GOT THERE. WHEN MY LADS BURST IN, HE WAS STANDING IN FRONT OF THE OBSERVATION WINDOW.

HE DIDN'T EVEN PUT UP A FIGHT. THEY JUST OPENED UP WITH THE SHOOTERS AND...

WHERE'S DASCOMBE?

SORRY?

DASCOMBE. WHERE IS HE?

WELL, I DUNNO...

HE MUST'VE WANDERED OFF SOMEWHERE. IN A DAZE, I EXPECT.

HE'D HAD A SHOCK.

YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN.

HOW LONG AGO DID THIS HAPPEN?

I... BUT...

TEN MINUTES. TEN OR FIFTEEN MINUTES.



WHY DID I HIT HIM?



THE LEADER WAS GOOD ABOUT IT, REALLY. I EXPECTED A LOT MORE OF A ROLLYCKING THAN I GOT...



AND THEN SENDING ME HERE TO NORFOLK.

SENDING ME ON A HOLIDAY, FOR GOD'S SAKE. I MEAN, THERE'S NOTHING HERE SINCE THE '89 FLOOD, BUT...



A HOLIDAY. HE MUST BE WORRIED ABOUT ME.

I'M WORRIED ABOUT ME.



DOMINIC SOUNDED ALRIGHT ON THE PHONE LAST NIGHT, COPING WELL ENOUGH. TOOK ME AN HOUR TO GET THROUGH AND WE TALKED FOR FOUR MINUTES.



I WONDER IF IT WAS HIM WHO TOLD EVERYBODY ABOUT ME AND DELIA?

NO.

PROBABLY DELIA.

SHE SAID SHE HADN'T, BUT... WELL, SHE NEVER TOLD ME ABOUT WHAT SHE'D DONE AT LARKHILL.



WE ONLY DID IT THREE TIMES, ALL TOLD. ALL THOSE YEARS...

WE SHARED THAT BOTTLE OF SCOTCH SHE'D BOUGHT, OVER AT MY HOUSE.



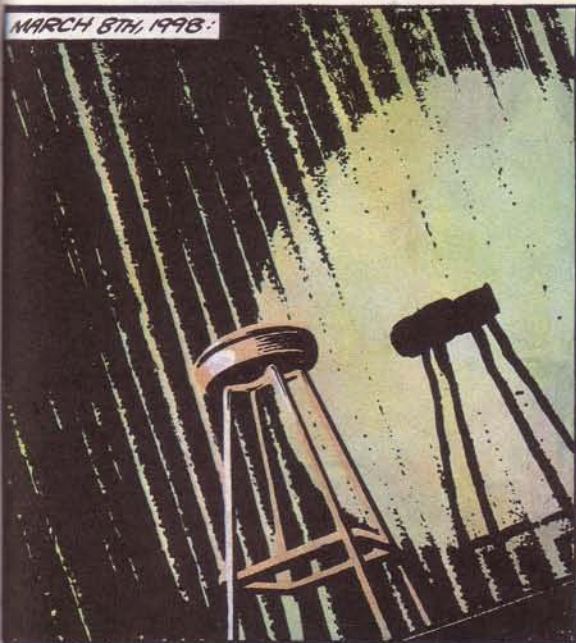
AND I MADE US BACON AND EGGS.

AT FOLK IN THE MORNING.





MARCH 8TH, 1998



I'M NOT POLITICALLY
TICKLISH AND
THEORY MAKES
ME WEARY...



...AND AFFAIRS
OF STATE AREN'T
MY KIND OF
AFFAIRS.



AND I'D NEVER BED,
NOR MUCH LESS WED
THE WAG WHOSE FLAG
IS DEEPEST RED. MY
TASTES RUN MORE
TO LONDONDERRY
AIRS...



BUT AT RALLIES IN THE
NIGHT WITH ALL THE
TORCHES BURNING BRIGHT
I FEEL A STIRRING IN
ME I CANNOT
NEGLECT...

...AND I'LL GRASP
WITH MAD ABANDON
ANY LAD WITH AN
ARM BAND ON AND
WHOSE CLITE SALUTE
IS MANLY AND
ERECT!



I LIKE THE BOOTS
(DADA DADA DADA DA)
I LIKE THE AT-TI-TUDE,
I LIKE THE POINT AT
WHICH THE LEGAL
MEETS THE LEWD.

I LIKE THE THRILL
(DADAD DADA
DADA DA) OF
THE TRIUMPHANT
WILL...



...I LIKE THE
MARCHING AND
THE MUSIC AND
THE MOOD!



SO IF SOME BLONDE
AND BLUE-EYED BOY
WOULD CARE TO TEACH
ME STRENGTH THROUGH
JOY...









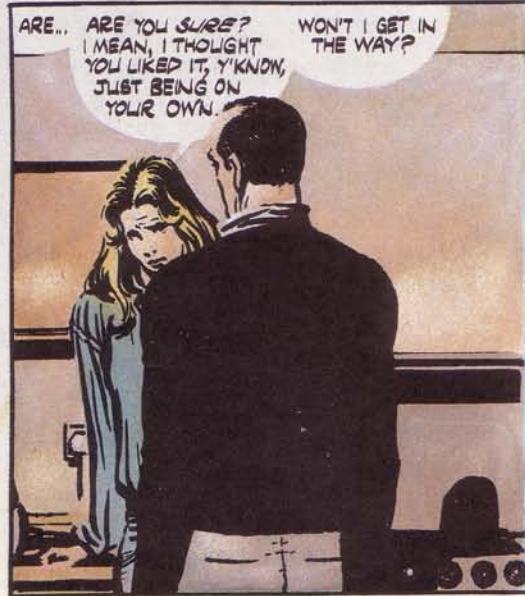
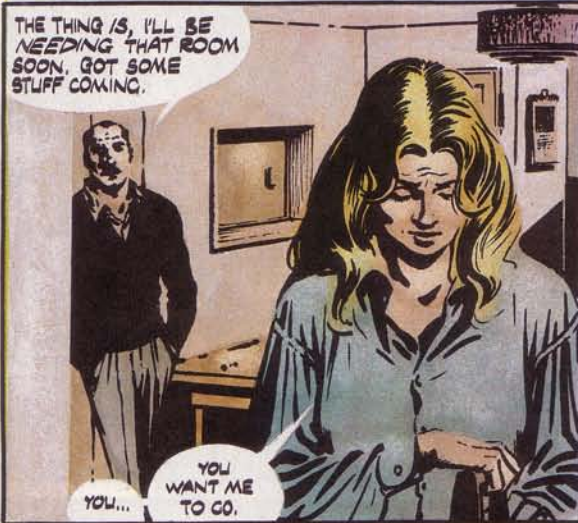


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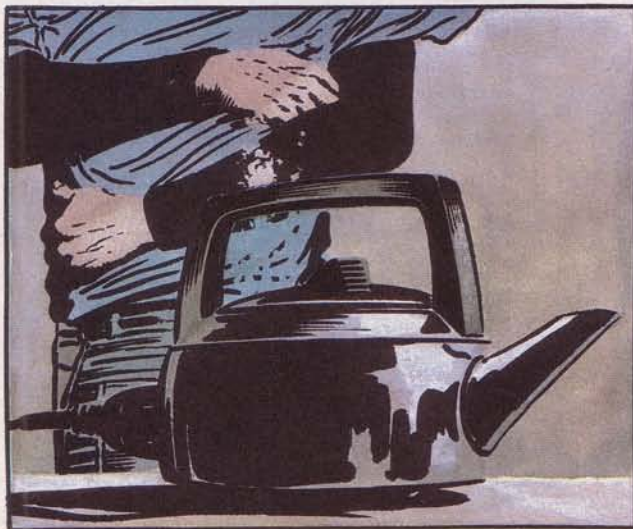
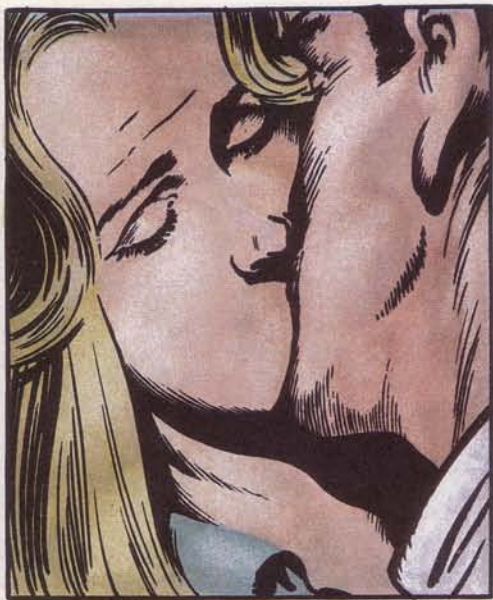


CHAPTER 7 VISITORS

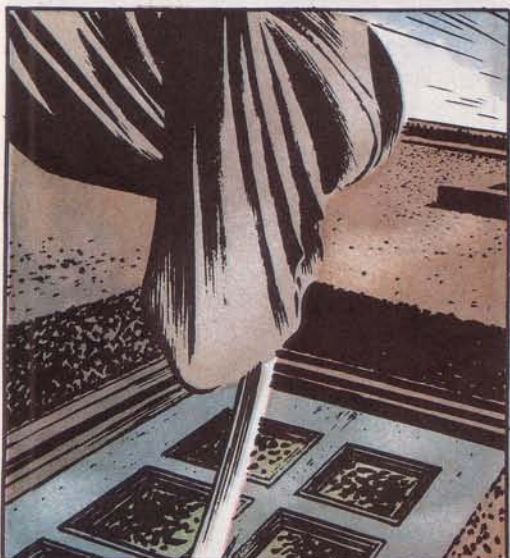








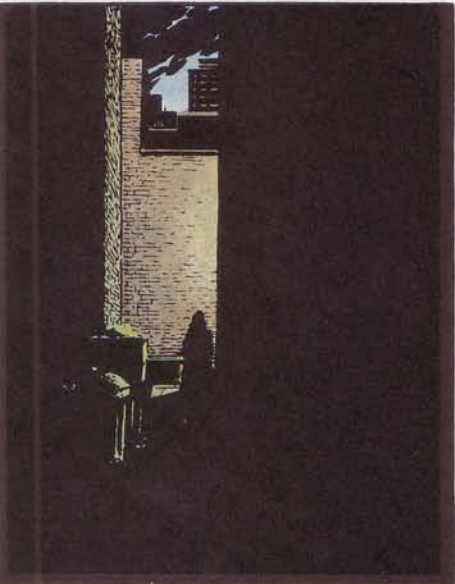
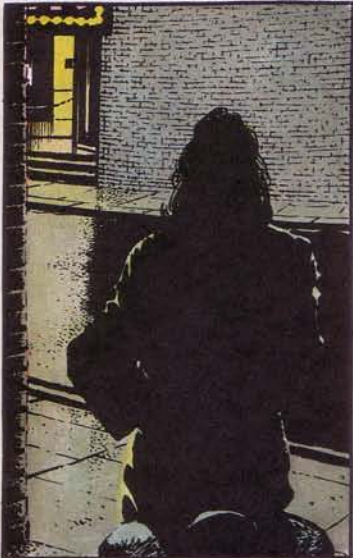


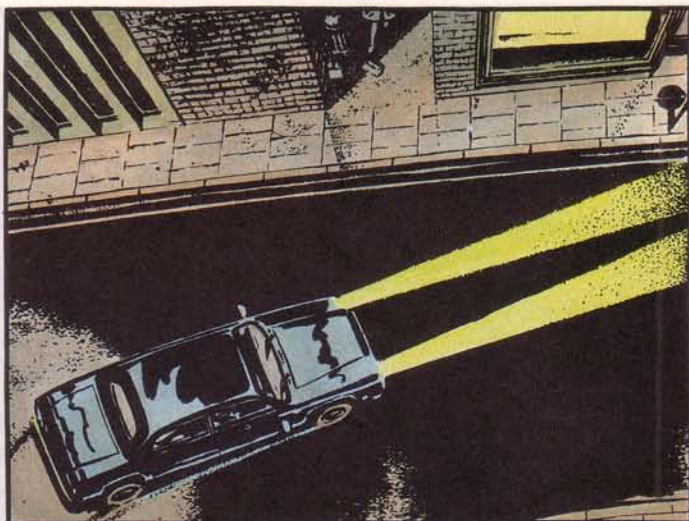
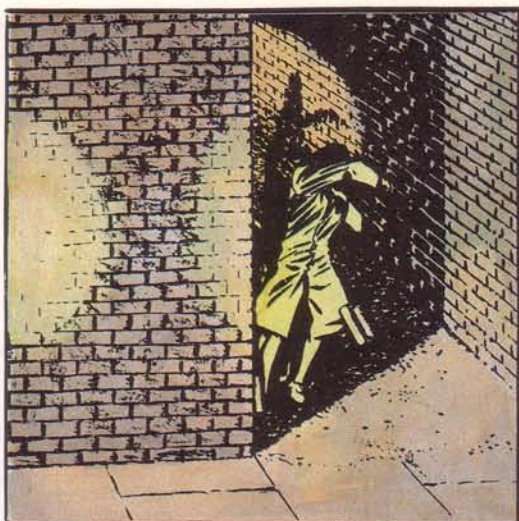


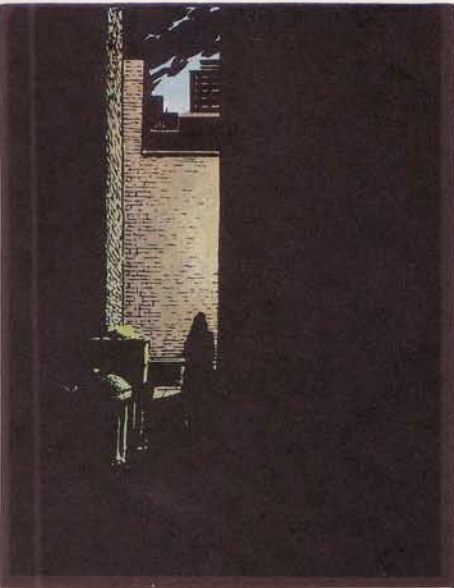
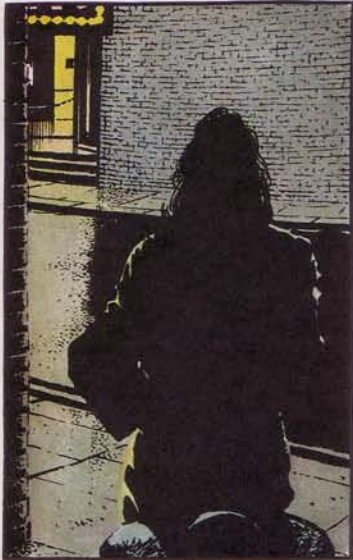


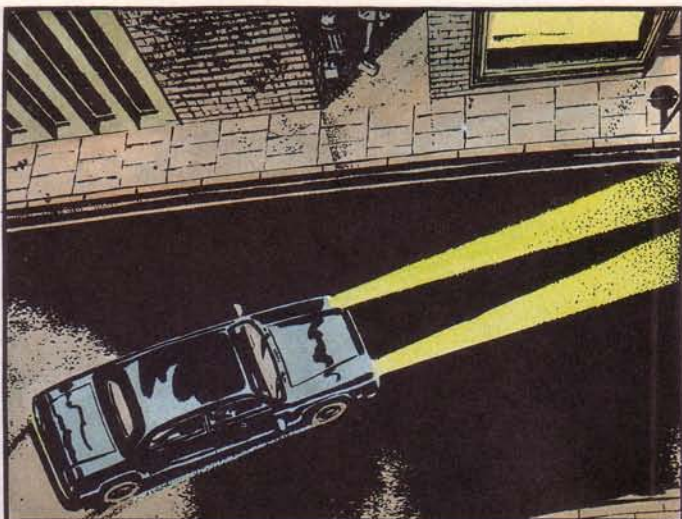


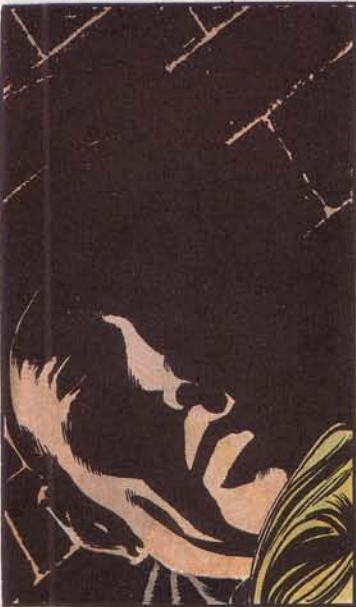












THE AIR AROUND ME IS COMPLETELY BLACK. I THINK THAT PERHAPS I'M BACKSTAGE AT THE THEATRE, DURING THE INTERVAL.

THERE ARE MUFFLED
BUMPINGS NEARBY.
STAGE-HANDS ARE
REARRANGING THE
SCENERY.

I SMELL ROSES, AND
THINK ABOUT THE
SCENTED BIRTHDAY
CARDS MY MOTHER
FOUND IN A SHOE
BOX AT OUR HOUSE
ON SHOOTER'S HILL.

THE PETALS FALL,
PENCIL SHAVINGS
OF CREAM FLESH

**EVERYTHING
CHANGES.**

CHAPTER 9

VICISSITUDE

IT'S MY BIRTHDAY, I'M STILL
IN THE THEATRE, BUT I
KNOW THAT IT'S REALLY
OUR OLD HOUSE.

I CAN HEAR A PARTY IN
THE ROOM UPSTAIRS.

They're wicki-wack

VALERIE PAGE
THE ROSE FOREST

THE BLACK SHADOWS OF THE PAST
BRED THIS HALF-MAN HALF-DEMON!

He looked acted like
a man... but the manner
of the monster's pause
passing from lazier to
win... reared on his mind

"ROM"

WEDD

I KNOW IT'S A BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR ME, BUT I HAVE A SINKING FEELING THAT IT WILL BE OVER BY THE TIME I GET THERE.

IT'S TAKING ME SO LONG TO GET READY

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHY I'M BOTHERING TO GET DRESSED UP LIKE THIS, BUT I FEEL AS IF IT'S EXPECTED OF ME

I WISH I DIDN'T HAVE TO.
I WANT TO GO TO THE
PARTY NOW.

EVEYP

I'M GLAD DAD COULD COME.
HAVEN'T SEEN HIM MUCH
SINCE I STARTED WORK AT
THE MATCH FACTORY.

YOU'RE MISSING
THE PARTY WE'VE
HIRED A PUNCH AND
JUDY MAN SPECIALLY..

HE LEADS ME UPSTAIRS
TO THE PARTY, AND I
WONDER IF THIS IS OUR
OLD HOUSE AFTER ALL.



SUDDENLY, I REMEMBER
THAT I'M AT AN OLD FOLKS'
HOME IN SOUTH KENSINGTON.

THE PUNCH AND JUDY
MAN HAS BEEN ARRANGED
TO ENTERTAIN THE INMATES.
WHY DID I THINK IT WAS MY
BIRTHDAY?

I MOVE THROUGH
THE CROWD FOR A
BETTER LOOK AT
WHAT'S HAPPENING
ON STAGE. SOME
VOLUNTEERS HAVE
GONE UP FROM THE
AUDIENCE...

THEY'RE STANDING IN A LINE
IN FRONT OF MR PUNCH. I
THINK I KNOW SOME OF
THEM...

WHAT'S HE GOING
TO DO?



THAT'S THE
WAY TO DO
IT!

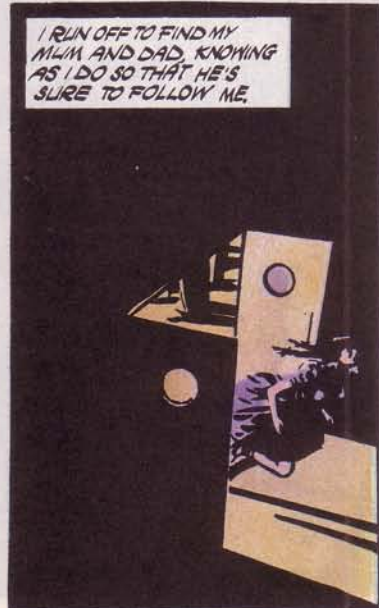


OH, DEAR
DEAR DEAR

WHY DOESN'T SOMEBODY STOP
HIM? EVERYBODY'S JUST
LAUGHING!

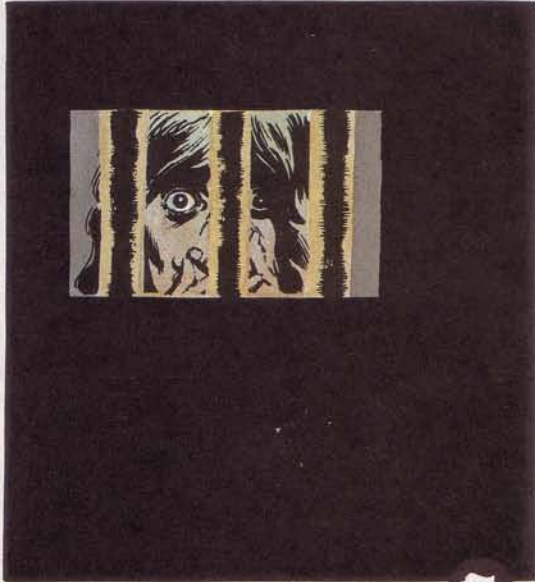
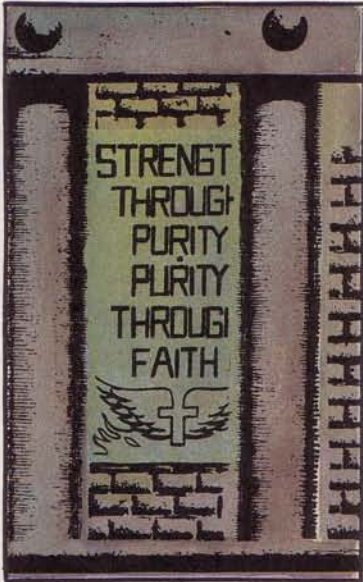
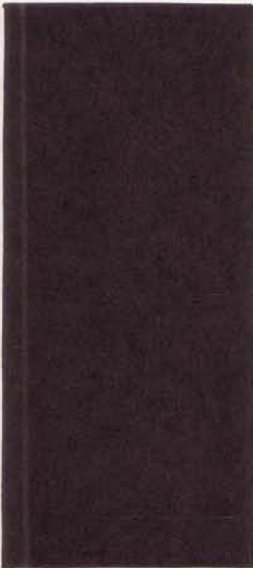


I RUN OFF TO FIND MY
MUM AND DAD, KNOWING
AS I DO SO THAT HE'S
SURE TO FOLLOW ME.











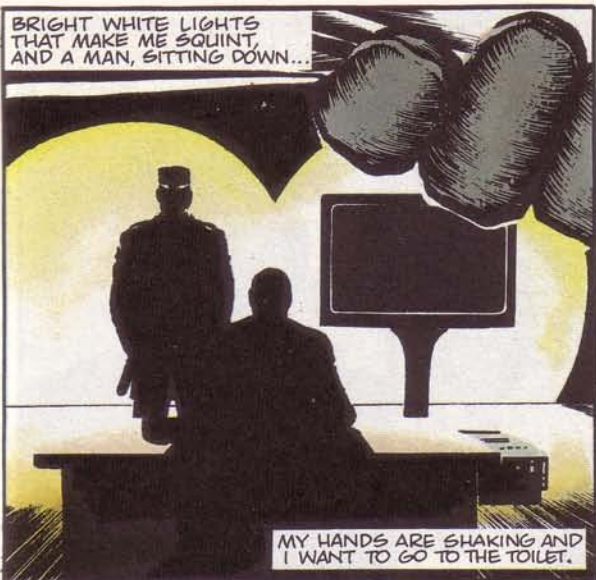
...AND THERE'S A RAT.

CHAPTER 10 VERMIN





BRIGHT WHITE LIGHTS
THAT MAKE ME SQUINT,
AND A MAN, SITTING DOWN...



MY HANDS ARE SHAKING AND
I WANT TO GO TO THE TOILET.

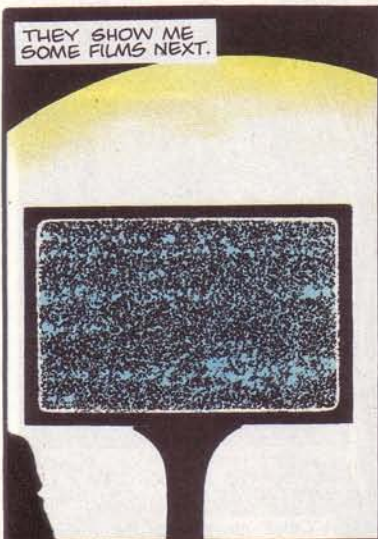
HE ASKS IF I
KNOW WHY
I'M HERE.

I SAY NO.



HE CALLS ME A LYING LITTLE
BASTARD, AND I FEEL LIKE I'VE
BEEN HIT IN THE STOMACH.

THEY SHOW ME
SOME FILMS NEXT.



THERE'S A GIRL TALKING TO A MAN.
SHE'S SHOVING HER HIPS OUT AT
HIM, BUT IT LOOKS CLUMSY AND
AWFUL. SHE'S A PROSTITUTE, I THINK.



WHY ARE THEY
SHOWING ME
THIS? IS THIS...?



OH.

OH, IT'S ME.



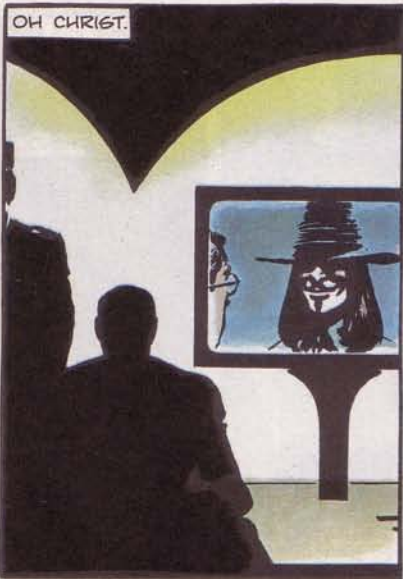
LAST NOVEMBER...
WESTMINSTER
BRIDGE, AND...



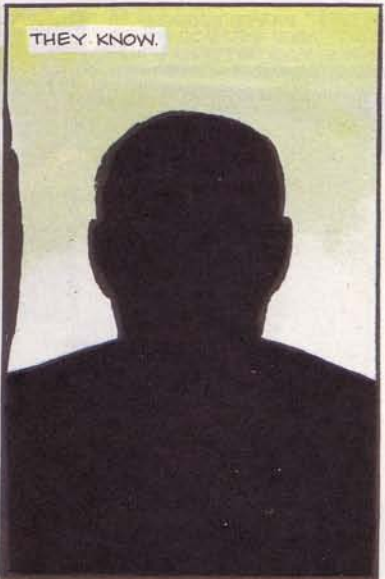
... THEY WERE GOING TO
RAPE ME. THEY HAD ME
UP AGAINST A WALL AND
THEY WERE GOING TO
KILL ME, AND THEN...



AND THEN...



OH CHRIST.



THEY KNOW.



THE MAN STARTS TALKING AGAIN, BUT I'M BARELY LISTENING...

WHAT AM I GOING TO SAY? WHAT CAN I TELL THEM?

HE SAYS I WAS FOUND OUTSIDE THE KITTY KAT KELLER BY OFFICERS WATCHING THE CLUB PRIOR TO A RAID.



I WAS CHLOROFORMED TO AVOID AN ALARM.

I HAD A LOADED GUN...

I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT HE WANTS ME TO SAY. WHY DON'T THEY STOP THE FILM? HE HAS A WELSH ACCENT. HE KEEPS TALKING...



...AND THEN HE TELLS ME THAT I'M TO BE FORMALLY CHARGED WITH THE ATTEMPTED MURDER OF SENIOR OFFICER PETER CREEDEY A FREQUENT CUSTOMER OF THE KITTY KAT KELLER...



...AND THEN THE MAN BEHIND ME PUTS THE BLINDFOLD BACK ON.

BLIND, STUMBLING, SOMEONE'S
HAND ON MY WRISTS, TIGHT
ENOUGH TO HURT...

WE GO SOMEWHERE. THEY
PUSH ME DOWN. I SCREAM,
EXPECTING TO FALL...

...BUT THERE'S
A CHAIR.

SOMEONE GRABS
HOLD OF MY HAIR...

WHAT ARE THEY DOING?
I FEEL THEM CUTTING AT IT.

...AND THEN THERE'S
SOMETHING WET...

THEY'RE...

OH NO.
OH GOD...

THEY DON'T
NEED TO DO
THIS...

AFTER A LONG TIME,
IT'S FINISHED.

A DOOR OPENS.
I CAN HEAR A
WOMAN'S VOICE,
VERY CLOSE...

A DOCTOR? DID I HEAR
SOMEONE SAY THAT?

THEY STAND
ME UP, AND...

...I AM GIVEN...
AN EXAMINATION...

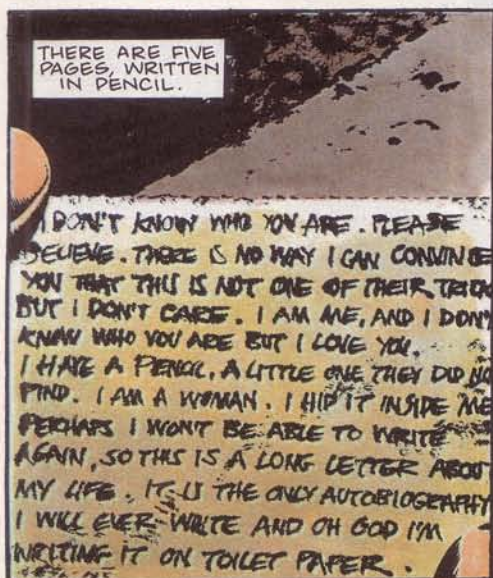
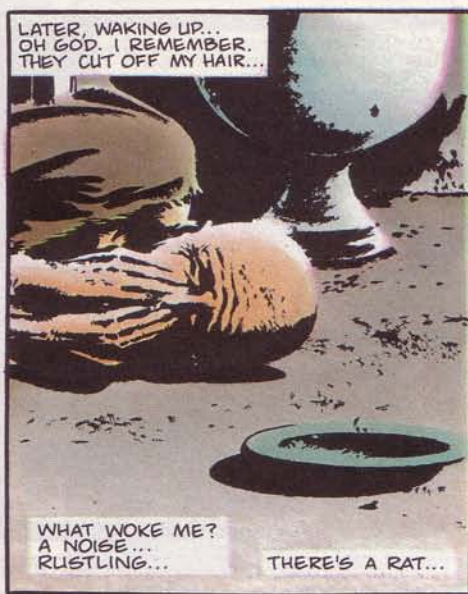
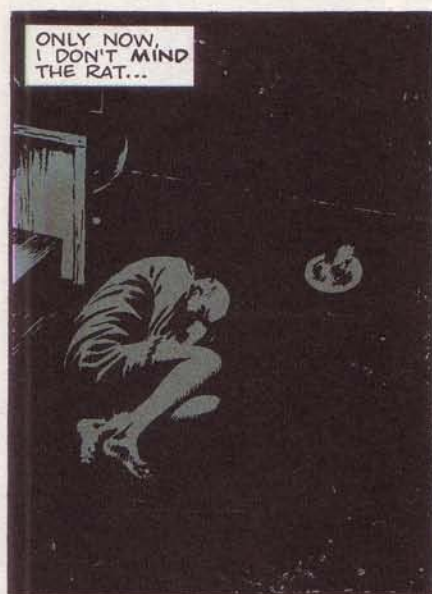
I THINK IT'S
THE WOMAN...

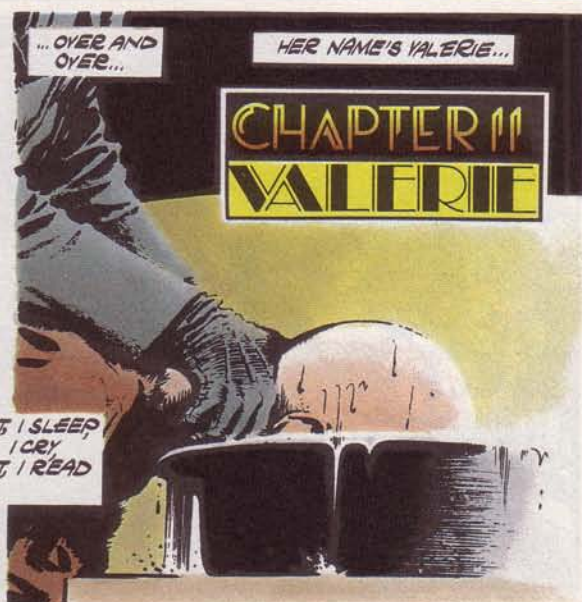
...AND THEN THEY
TAKE ME
SOMEWHERE ELSE...

...AND THEY TAKE
OFF THE BLINDFOLD...

...AND THERE'S
A CELL...

...AND THERE'S
A RAT.





"I KNOW WHO YOU ARE.
THERE IS NO WAY I CAN
IF THIS IS NOT ONE OF
DON'T CARE. I AM ME,
WHO YOU ARE BUT I LOVE
A PENCIL, A LITTLE ONE
AM A WOMAN. I HID IT
I WON'T BE ABLE TO
TO THIS IS A LONG LETTER.
IT IS THE ONLY AUTOGRAPH
ER WRITE AND OH GO
IT ON TOILET PAPER

"I WAS BORN IN NOTTINGHAM
IN 1957, AND IT RAINED A
LOT. I PASSED MY ELEVEN
PLUS AND WENT TO GIRL'S
GRAMMAR. I WANTED TO
BE AN ACTRESS.



"I MET MY FIRST
GIRLFRIEND AT
SCHOOL.

"HER NAME WAS SARA.
SHE WAS FOURTEEN
AND I WAS FIFTEEN
BUT WE WERE BOTH
IN MISS WATSON'S
CLASS.



"HER WRISTS. HER
WRISTS WERE
BEAUTIFUL.



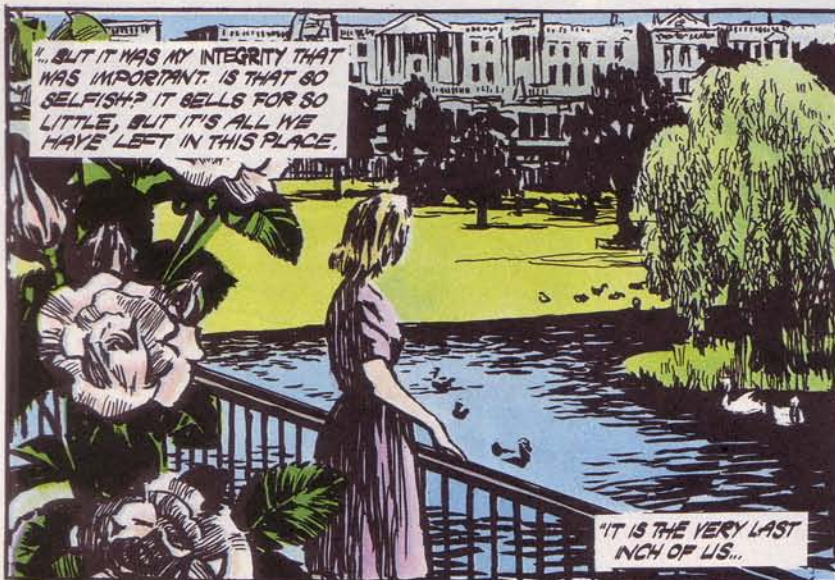
"I SAT IN BIOLOGY
CLASS, STARING AT
THE PICKLED RABBIT
FOETUS IN ITS JAR,
LISTENING WHILE
MR. HIRD SAID IT WAS
AN ADOLESCENT
PHASE THAT
PEOPLE OUTGROW...

"SARA DID.
I DIDN'T.



"IN 1976 I STOPPED
PRETENDING AND TOOK
A GIRL CALLED
CHRISTINE HOME TO
MEET MY PARENTS.

"A WEEK LATER I MOVED
TO LONDON, ENROLLING
AT DRAMA COLLEGE. MY
MOTHER SAID I BROKE
HER HEART...



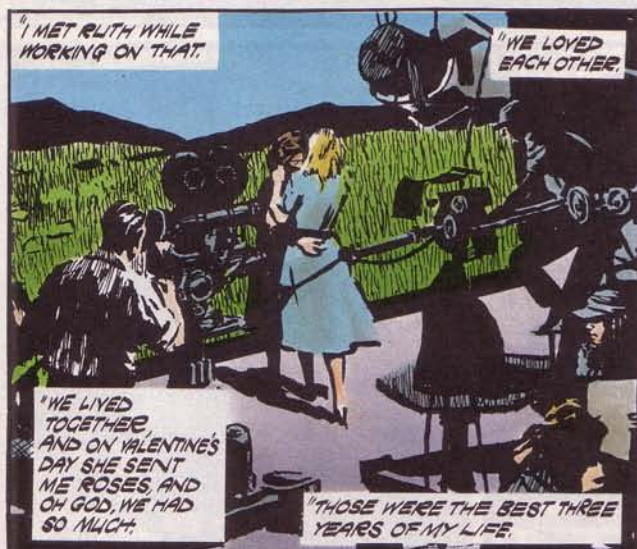
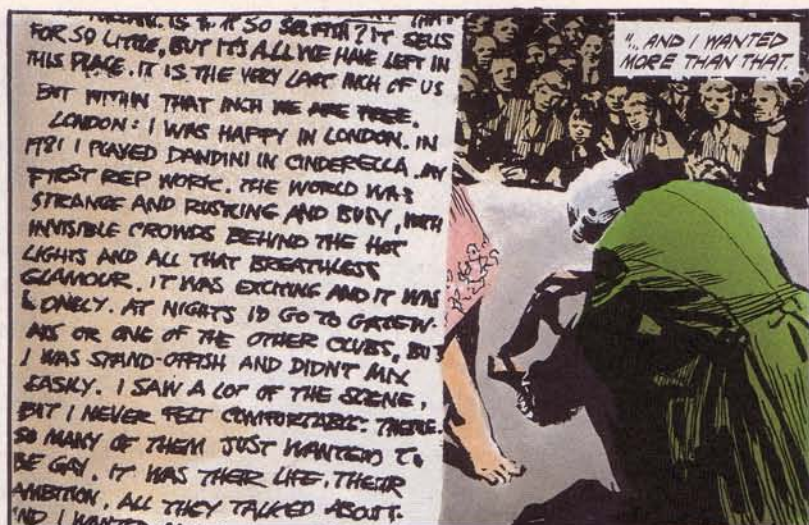
"...BUT IT WAS MY INTEGRITY THAT
WAS IMPORTANT. IS THAT SO
SELFISH? IT BELLS FOR SO
LITTLE, BUT IT'S ALL WE
HAVE LEFT IN THIS PLACE.

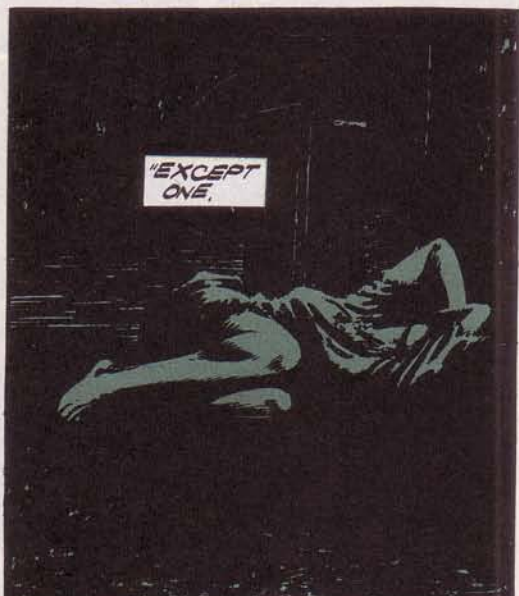
"IT IS THE VERY LAST
INCH OF US...

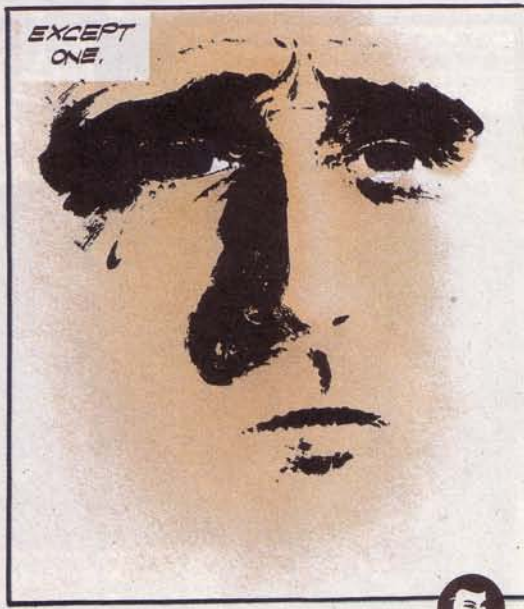
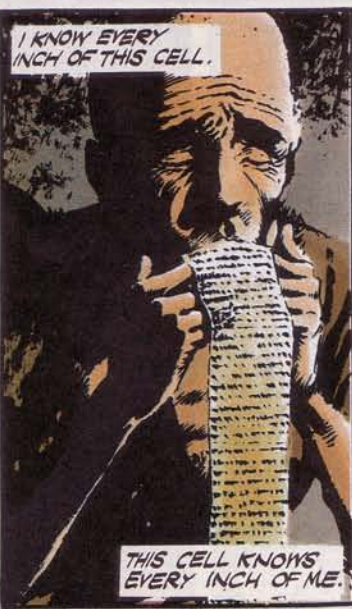
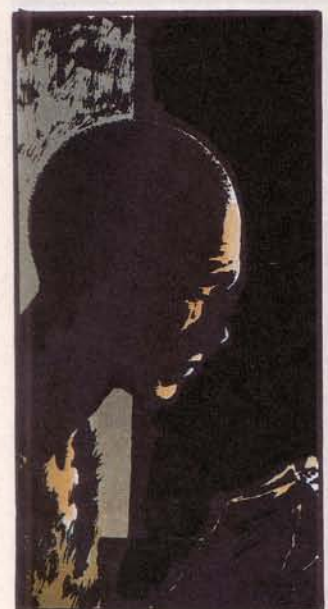
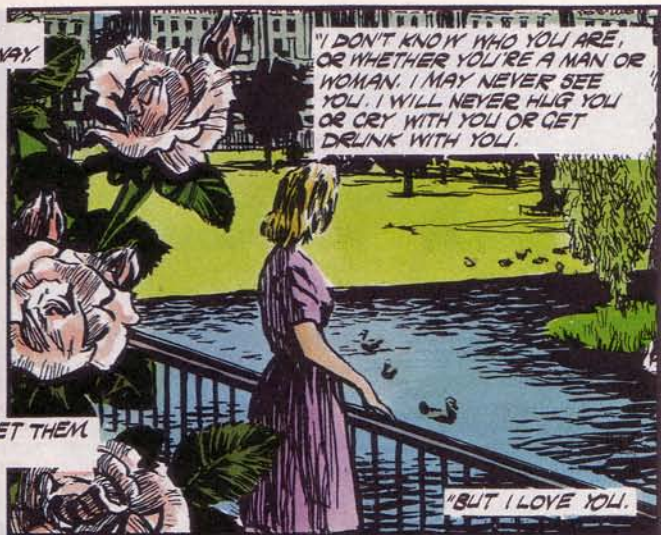


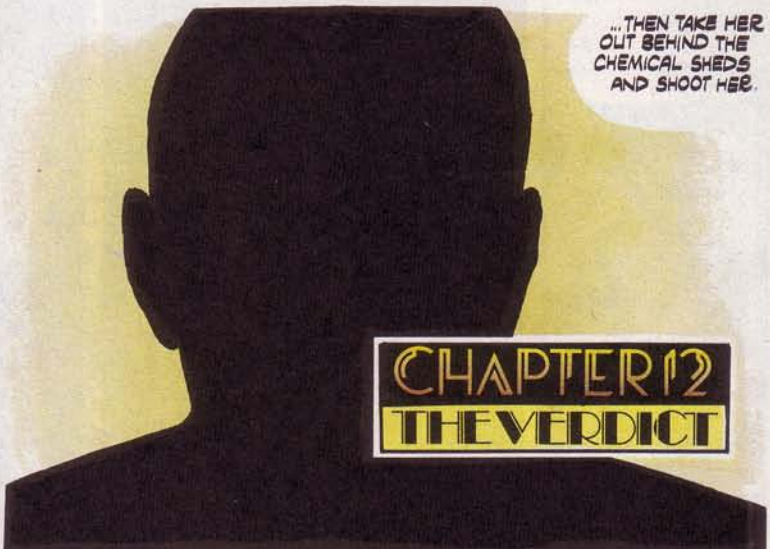
"...BUT WITHIN THAT
INCH WE ARE FREE."

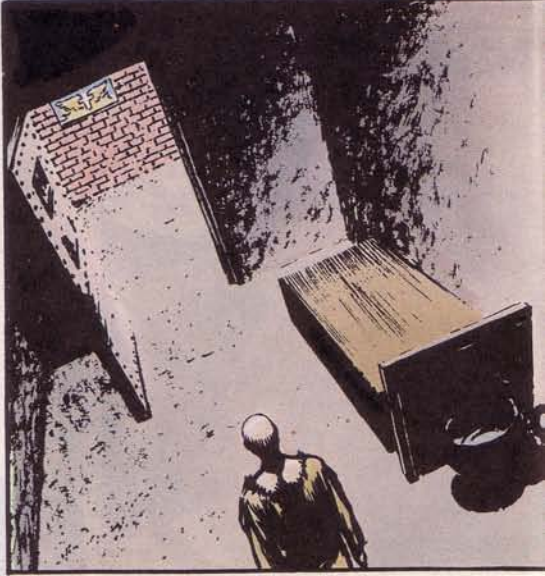
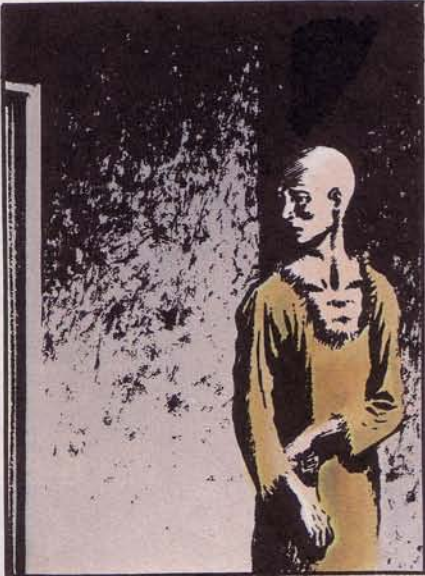


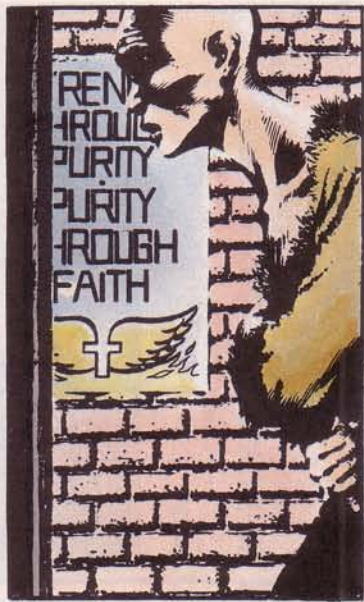
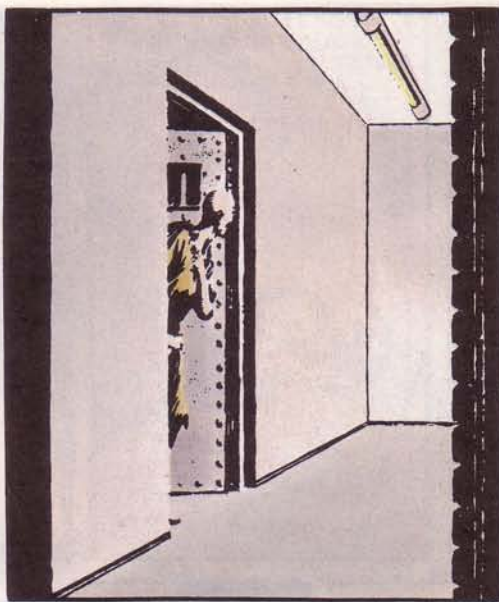
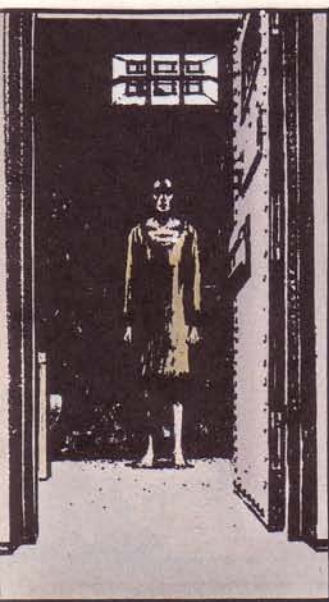


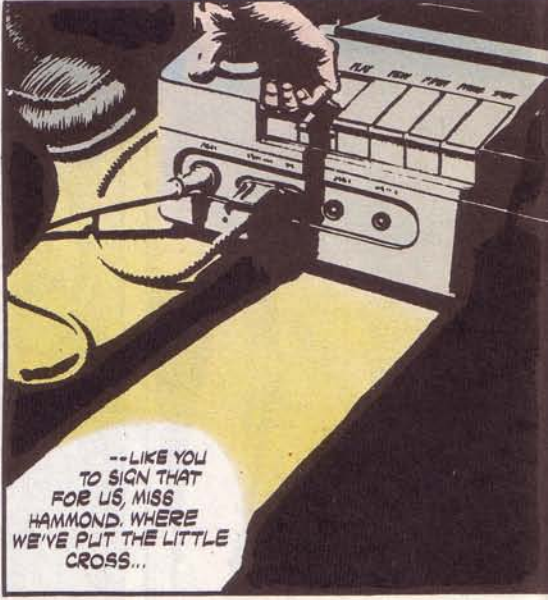
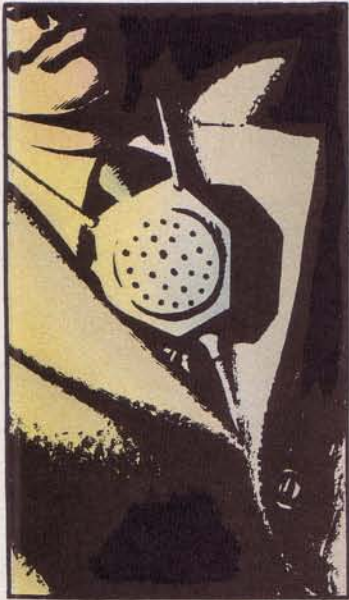
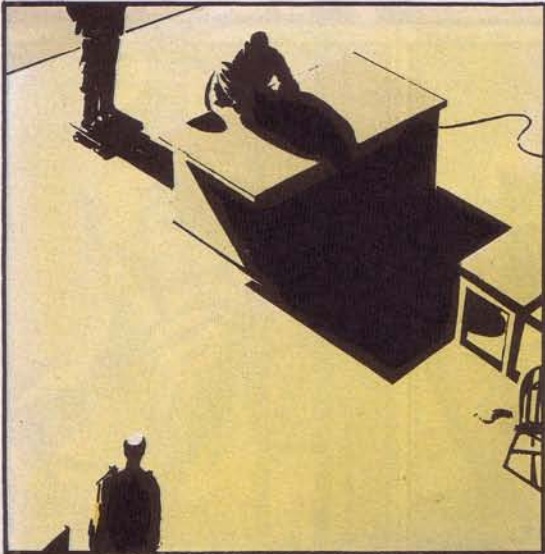




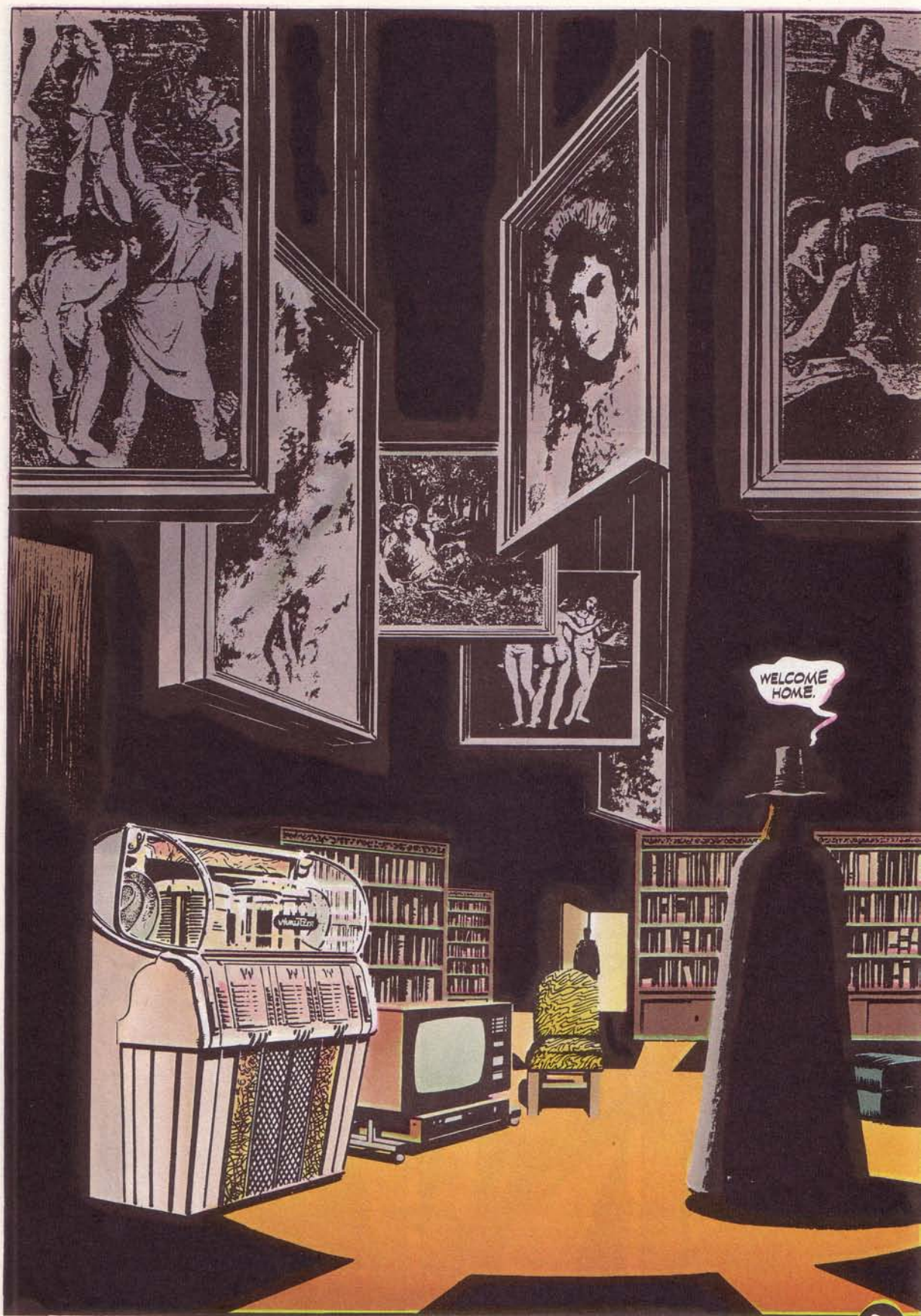




















... AND SHOT.



ALL CONVICTS, HUNCHED AND DEFORMED BY THE SMALLNESS OF THEIR CELLS; THE WEIGHT OF THEIR CHAINS; THE UNFAIRNESS OF THEIR SENTENCES...

I DIDN'T PUT YOU IN A PRISON, EVEY.

I JUST SHOWED YOU THE BARS.



YOU'RE WRONG! IT'S JUST LIFE, THAT'S ALL! IT'S HOW LIFE IS! IT'S WHAT WE'VE GOT TO PUT UP WITH.

IT'S ALL WE'VE GOT. WHAT GIVES YOU THE RIGHT TO DECIDE IT'S NOT GOOD ENOUGH?



YOU'RE IN A PRISON, EVEY. YOU WERE BORN IN A PRISON. YOU'VE BEEN IN A PRISON SO LONG, YOU NO LONGER BELIEVE THERE'S A WORLD OUTSIDE.

SHUT UP! YOU'RE MAD! I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT!



THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE AFRAID, EVEY. YOU'RE AFRAID BECAUSE YOU CAN FEEL FREEDOM. CLOSING IN UPON YOU, YOU'RE AFRAID BECAUSE FREEDOM IS TERRIFYING...

DON'T BACK AWAY FROM IT, EVEY. PART OF YOU UNDERSTANDS THE TRUTH EVEN AS PART PRETENDS NOT TO.

I CAN'T FEEL ANYTHING! THERE'S NOTHING TO FEEL! LEAVE ME ALONE!



WOMAN, THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT MOMENT OF YOUR LIFE.

DON'T RUN FROM IT.



I DON'T KNOW WHAT... YOU'RE...

OH GOD. OH GOD. I CAN'T BREATHE...

ASTHMA... WHEN I WAS... A LITTLE GIRL...



GOOD. YOU'RE ALMOST THERE. GO CLOSER. FEEL THE SHAPE OF IT.

YOUR MOTHER DIED. THEY TOOK YOUR FATHER AWAY. THERE'S A LITTLE GIRL, EVEY, AND SHE'S SCREAMING...

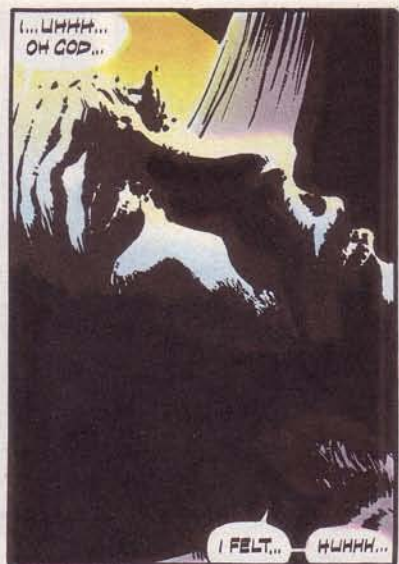
A-HUH...

AA-HUHH...

OH, MAKE IT STOP.



MUMMY, DADDY, PLEASE MAKE IT STOP!!





SEPTEMBER 3RD, 1998.
THE NOSE:



SIX MONTHS, AND NOT A PEEP DO YOU THINK IT'S ALL OVER?

MR. FINCH?



HMM?

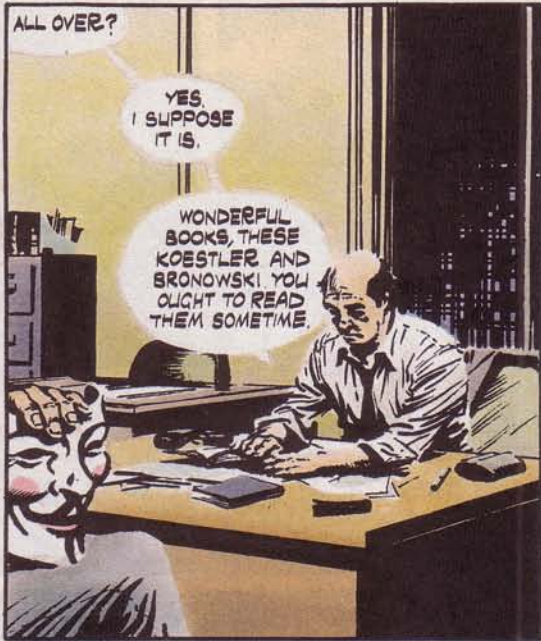
SORRY, DOMINIC. WHAT DID YOU SAY?

I... I SAID 'DO YOU THINK IT'S ALL OVER?'

ALL OVER?

YES, I SUPPOSE IT IS.

WONDERFUL BOOKS, THESE KOESTLER AND BRONOWSKI YOU OUGHT TO READ THEM SOMETIME.



UH, YES. YES PERHAPS I WILL...

LOOK, UH, MR. FINCH... MAYBE YOU SHOULD GO HOME NOW. I CAN LOOK AFTER THE SHOP YOU'VE DONE ENOUGH TODAY.



COBBLERS

I HAVEN'T DONE A STROKE SINCE I CAME BACK FROM THE EAST COAST, AND YOU KNOW IT. YOU'VE BEEN CARRYING ME.

PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT, THOUGH. PERHAPS I WILL BE GETTING ALONG NOW...



OH... I PICKED UP THE SUPPLIES FROM THE PHARMACY THAT YOU GAVE ME THAT CHITTY FOR.

PHILLIPS SAID YOU'D HAVE TO CALL BY LATER TO SIGN THE POISONS REGISTER. I SAID YOU WOULD



HOPE THAT'S OKAY...

THAT'S FINE.

GOOD NIGHT, LAD.

CHAPTER 14
MIGNETTES

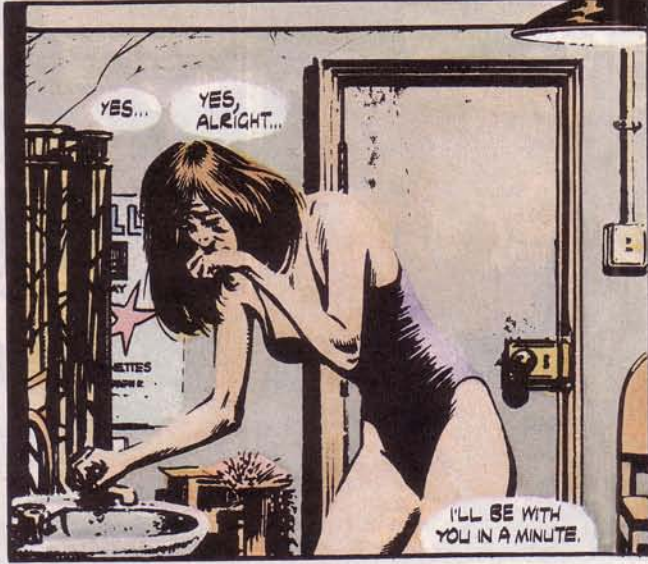


THE SHADOW GALLERY:

...THEN HE BRISKLY FRISKS THE TORN REMAINS FOR A FINGERPRINT OR CRIMSON STAINS AND ENDEAVOURS TO IGNORE THE CHAINS THAT HE WALKS IN TO HIS KNEES.

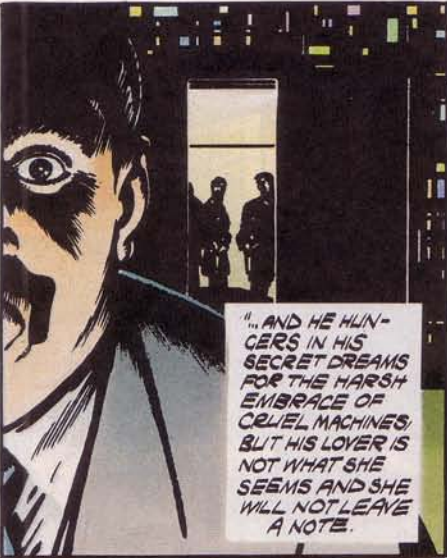


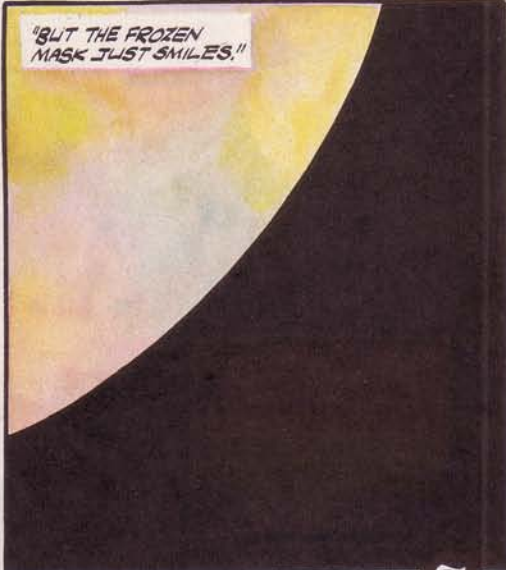








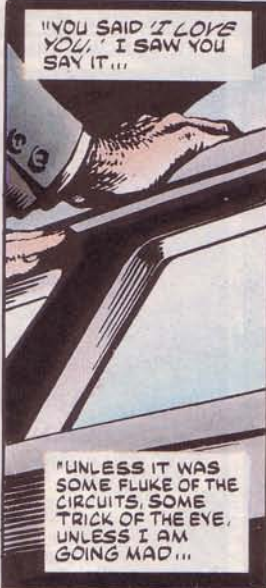






THE LAND OF DO-AS-YOU-PLEASE







OH MY GOD.

YOU... AREN'T YOU FINCH'S MAN?



WHAT HAPPENED HERE? WE WERE JUST ARRIVING WHEN WE HEARD THE EXPLOSION...



M-MR. HEYER?

BOMB... I WAS JUST... COMING OUT OF THE BUILDING...

MR. ETHERIDGE, SIR... HE WAS WORKING LATE...



ETHERIDGE? WHAT IS HE HURT?

H-HE'S DEAD, SIR.

OH GOD. I THINK I'M GOING TO BE SICK...



HUGH,

CONRAD, WHAT'S GOING ON? YOU JUST RAN OFF AND LEFT ME!

TH-THERE'S BEEN A BOMB. THE TOWER...



THE EYE AND THE EAR ARE BOTH CRIPPLED! I'VE GOT TO GET IN TOUCH WITH THE LEADER STRAIGHT AWAY...

HALF LONDON HEARD THAT BANG. THE MOUTH WILL HAVE TO ISSUE A STATEMENT...

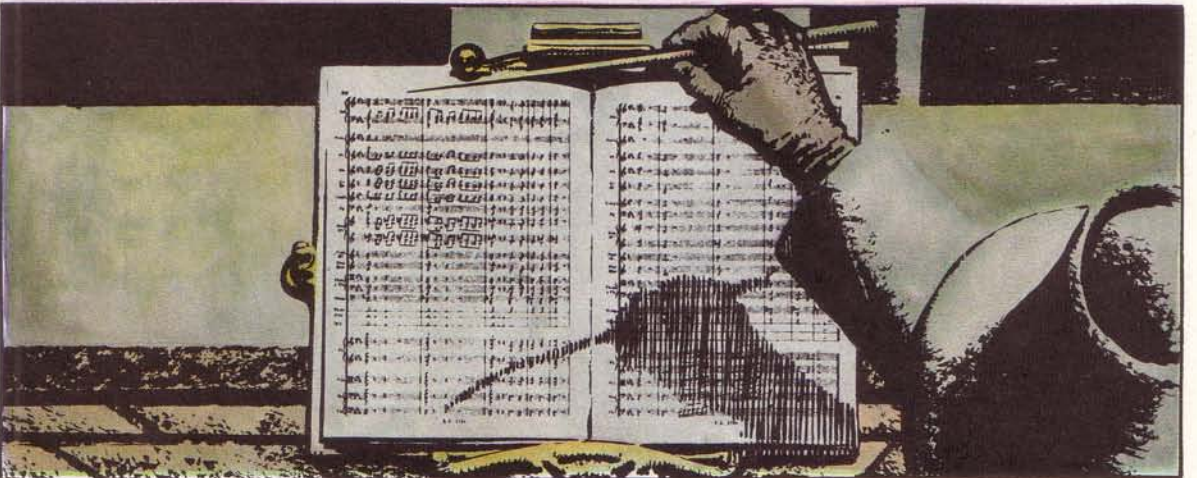


ANOTHER "SCHEDULED DEMOLITION"? WHO'S GOING TO BELIEVE IT AFTER THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT AND THE OLD BAILEY? WHAT CAN THEY POSSIBLY SAY?

I DON'T KNOW, ANYTHING.

AT A TIME LIKE THIS, ANYTHING'S BETTER THAN SILENCE...









"WHAT, AN' NO RADIO NEITHER? WELL, THAT'S BLOODY MARVELOUS! 'ERE'S ME PAYIN' LICENSE MONEY, AND..."

"'ERE, 'ANG ABOUT: YOU SAID 'E BOMBED THE G.P.O. TOWER AS WELL? DOES THAT MEAN THEY CAN'T..."



BOLLOCKS.



"...AND SHE SAYS NONE OF THE MICROPHONES ARE WORKING EITHER!"

"WON'T SEEM THE SAME, USED TO LIKE THE WAY THEM LITTLE CAMERAS WENT FORWARDS AND BACK. STILL..."

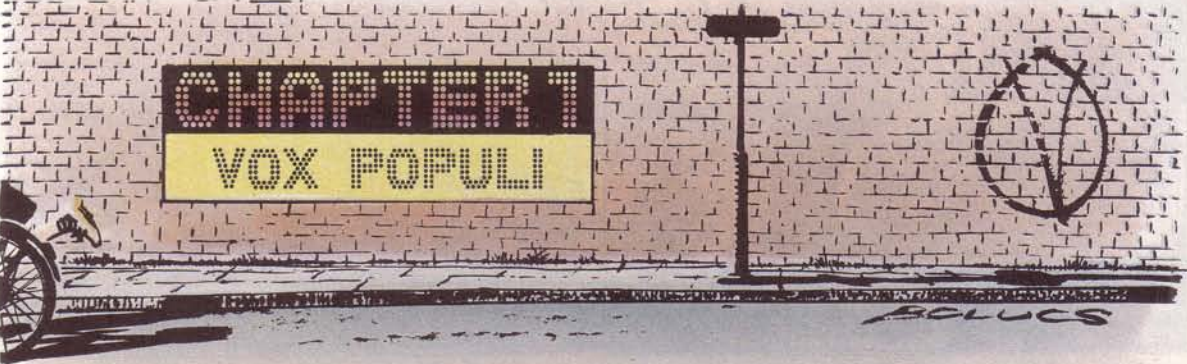
"I SUPPOSE THAT'S WHAT THEY CALL PROGRESS, EH?"



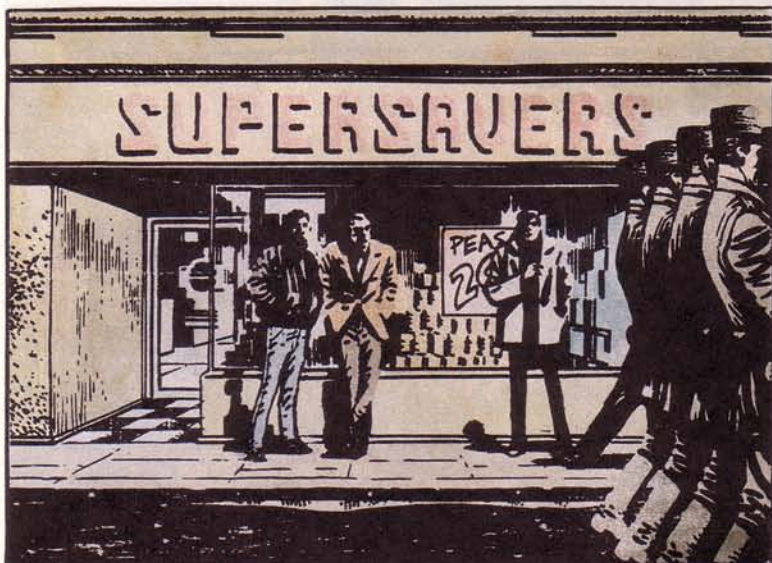
"...SO ANYWAY, WHEN WE 'EARD THE CAMERAS WERE OFF, WE WALKED 'OME SUDDENL'Y, 'E SEZ 'NOBODY'S WATCHIN'. 'OW ABOUT IT?"

"BLOODY CHEEK! THINKS 'E CAN DO WHATEVER 'E LIKES!"

"ALTHOUGH, I SUPPOSE..."











"BANG."



"...APPENIN' OVER
EAST FINCHLEY TO-
NIGHT."

"WHAT I 'ERD, THIS
NOBBY, 'IZ BIRD GOT
FINGERED OVER A TIN
O'BEANS, ONLY SHOT
THE POOR LOW, DIDN'T
THEY? SO, LIKE, EVERY-
BODY'S TOOLED UP, AN'."



"...JUST AS IF SHE WAS
A PAKI! WELL, THEY'VE
'AD IT! THEY COME
ROUND 'ERE TONIGHT,
THEY'RE GUNNA GEDDA
KICK IN THE 'ED..."

"A BIG KICK."



"IT DOES NOT DO TO
RELY TOO MUCH ON
SILENT MAJORITIES,
EVEY, FOR SILENCE
IS A FRAGILE THING..."

"ONE LOUD NOISE,
AND IT'S GONE."



"BUT THE PEOPLE ARE SO COWED AND DIS-ORGANISED, A FEW MIGHT TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PROTEST, BUT IT'LL JUST BE A VOICE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS."



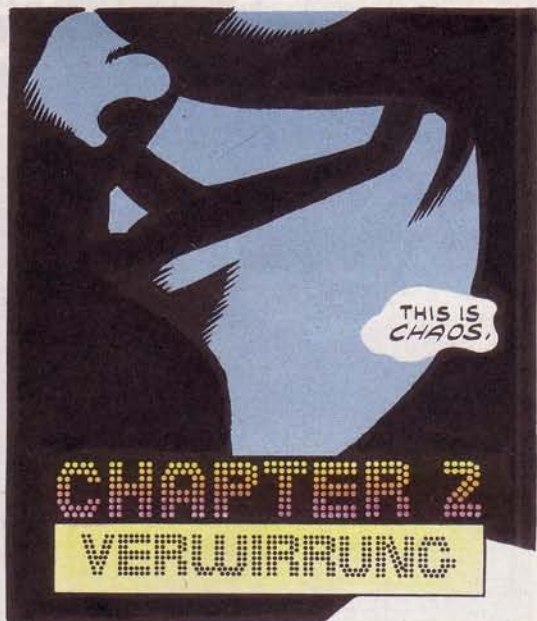
"NOISE IS RELATIVE TO THE SILENCE PRECEDING IT. THE MORE ABSOLUTE THE HUSH, THE MORE SHOCKING THE THUNDERCLAP."

"OUR MASTERS HAVE NOT HEARD THE PEOPLE'S VOICE FOR GENERATIONS, EVERY..."



"...AND IT IS MUCH, MUCH LOUDER THAN THEY CARE TO REMEMBER."







INVOLUNTARY ORDER BREEDS DISSATISFACTION, MOTHER OF DISORDER, PARENT OF THE GUILLOTINE.

AUTHORITARIAN SOCIETIES ARE LIKE FORMATION SKATING. INTRICATE, MECHANICALLY PRECISE AND ABOVE ALL, PRECARIOUS. BENEATH CIVILISATION'S FRAGILE CRUST, COLD CHAOS CHURNS...



"...AND THERE ARE PLACES WHERE THE ICE IS TREACHEROUSLY THIN."

EXIT



YUR UNDER ARREST.

AAA!

NAH, AM OANY KIDDEN.



OH! OH GOD, YOU...

L-LOOK, I'VE GOT THE MONEY. DID YOU GET THE... THE THING, LIKE I ASKED?

TO DEFEND MYSELF WITH?

OH AYE, THES'LL DEFEND YE, RIGHT 'NUFF.



THES'LL DEFEND SOMEBODY'S ENNARDS ENTAE THE GUTTER.



AD ADVISE YE TE GET ET HOME QUECK. EF YUR SERRCHED AY NEVER SEEN YE IN MA LIFE.

N-NO, I UNDERSTAND. I'LL TAKE IT STRAIGHT HOME. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

THANK YOU.



YUR WULCOME.







AUTHORITY ALLOWS TWO ROLES: THE TORTURER AND THE TORTURED. TWISTS PEOPLE INTO JOYLESS MANNEQUINS THAT FEAR AND HATE, WHILE CULTURE PLUNGES INTO THE ABYSS.

AUTHORITY DEFORMS THE REARING OF THEIR CHILDREN, MAKES A COCKFIGHT OF THEIR LOVE...



ALL RIGHT, CONRAD. THAT'S ENOUGH. GET ME A TOWEL.

WHEN DID THE LEADER AUTHORIZE CREEDY TO RECRUIT A GOON SQUAD?



LATE THIS AFTER-NOON, DO YOU WANT YOUR ROBE, HELEN?

NO,

DOESN'T SUSAN REALIZE THAT CREEDY'S ONLY WAITING FOR HIM TO CRACK COMPLETELY BEFORE MOVING IN WITH HIS PRIVATE ARMY AND STAGING A COUP?



THE LEADER MAY JUST BE UNDER STRAIN...

BALLS, CONRAD. HIS MIND'S DISINTEGRATING... AND WHEN IT GOES, I WANT YOU IN THE NUMBER ONE SEAT AND NOT THAT SECONDARY-SCHOOL OIK, CREEDY.



I SUPPOSE I SHALL HAVE TO DO EVERYTHING, AS USUAL.

YOU KNOW, YOU'RE QUITE A SUCCESSFUL YOUNG MAN, CONRAD. IF YOUR SUCCESS WASN'T ENTIRELY DUE TO MY EFFORTS, I MIGHT EVEN FANCY YOU.



NOW, I'VE GOT THINGS TO ORGANISE IN THE MORNING, SO I'M GOING TO BED. I EXPECT I SHALL BE ASLEEP WHEN YOU COME UP.

YOU WON'T BE NEEDING THE LIGHT ON IN HERE, WILL YOU?



AUTHORITY'S COLLAPSE SENDS CRACKS THROUGH BEDROOM, BOARDROOM, CHURCH AND SCHOOL ALIKE. ALL IS MISRULE.

EQUALITY AND FREEDOM ARE NOT LUXURIES TO LIGHTLY CAST ASIDE. WITHOUT THEM, ORDER CANNOT LONG ENDURE BEFORE APPROACHING DEPTHS BEYOND IMAGINING.



YOUR WHAT?

IT IS A TANGLED AND UNHAPPY TALE OF HEARTS BETRAYED AND LOYALTIES MIS-PLACED.

IT WAS NOT I THAT STRAYED. MY LOVE WAS JUSTICE; AND, INFATUATED WITH HER TRUTH AND LOVELINESS, I WORSHIPPED HER.

...UNTIL, BEHIND MY BACK, SHE TOOK UP WITH A MAN WHO VIOLATED AND ABUSED HER; SOMEONE FIERCE AND BRUTAL WITH BURNED CHILDREN ON HIS BREATH.

HE CHANGED HER. SHE ACQUIRED A TASTE FOR LEATHER, CHAINS AND WHIPS.

THE JUSTICE THAT I LOVED WAS GONE; WHO HAD SUCH KINDLY EYES; WHO TOOK SUCH SMALL AND CAREFUL STEPS...

TRANSFORMED, SHE GLARED THROUGH NARROW SLITS AND GROUND GOOD MEN BE-NEATH HER VICIOUS HEEL.

IMAGINE WHEN I LEARNED OF HER AFFAIR...

MY ANGER AND MY SHAME TO THINK HOW THEY'D MADE MOCK OF ALL THAT I LOVED MY JUSTICE AND HER BESTIAL SWAIN, CAVORTING IN THEIR BLOODSTAINED SHEETS.

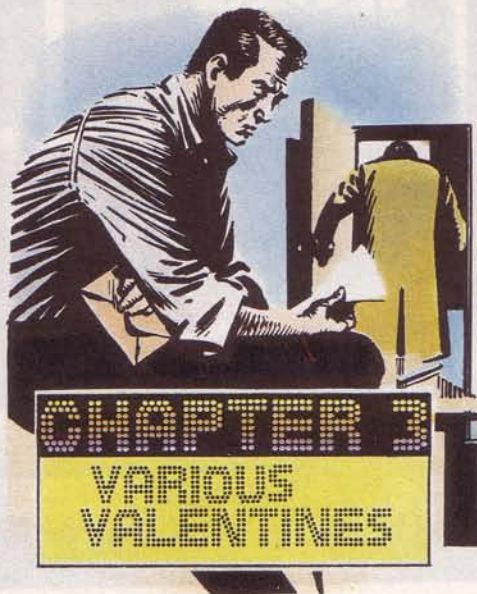
STILL, ALL IN LOVE AND WAR IS FAIR, THEY SAY. THIS BEING BOTH, AND TURN-ABOUT'S FAIR PLAY.

THOUGH I MUST BEAR A CUCKOLD'S HORNS, THEY'RE NOT A CROWN THAT I SHALL BEAR ALONE.

YOU SEE, MY RIVAL, THOUGH INCLINED TO ROAM, POSSESSED AT HOME A WIFE THAT HE ADORED.

HE'LL RUE HIS PROMISCUITY, THE ROGUE WHO STOLE MY ONLY LOVE, WHEN HE'S INFORMED HOW MANY YEARS IT IS...

... SINCE FIRST I BEDDED HIS.







HULLO, MESSSES.
A GOAT YER MUSSAGE.
SORRY AM LATE
AN A' THAT...

IN FUTURE,
YOU'LL BE PUNCTUAL.
I DON'T LIKE
WAITING.

DO YOU
KNOW WHO
I AM?



AHE, HUR THE
MESSSES D'THAT
BLOKE RUNNEN
THE EYE.

AND YOU'RE
RUNNING CREEPY'S
CIVILIAN AUXILIARY
FORCE.

YOU KNOW
HE'S PLANNING A
COUP? HE WANTS
TO BE LEADER.



A, WULL, A KNOW
NOTHIN' ABOUT
ANY O'THAAT...

DON'T PLAY DUMB. THIS
IS A STRAIGHT FORWARD
BUSINESS DECISION:
CREEPY WANTS TO BE
LEADER; I WANT
CONRAD TO BE
LEADER.

HOW MUCH
IS HE
PAYING YOU?



WULL, UH, AM GETTIN'
FIVE HUNNED AT
PRESENT...

REALLY? I'D
HAVE THOUGHT
FOUR HUNDRED
MAXIMUM.

I'M PREPARED
TO OFFER S/X, PLUS
AN INCREASE UPON YOUR
THUGS' CURRENT WAGES.



HE DON'T
PESS ABOUT,
DO HE? WHAT'S
MA JOAB?

YOU CARRY ON
WORKING FOR CREEPY,
DRAWING HIS WAGES,
BUT REPORTING
TO ME...

... AND WHEN
THE TIME COMES,
YOU REMEMBER WHO
YOU'RE REALLY
WORKING FOR.



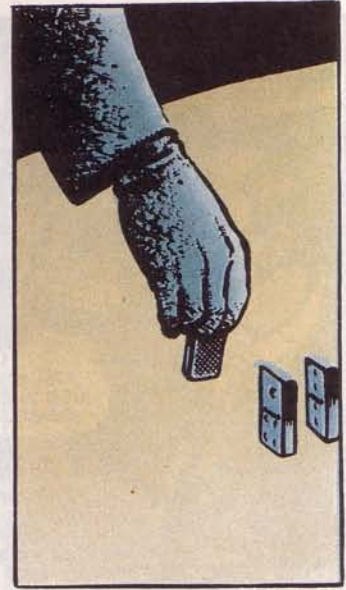
LUKE, AM NO
AGGRAVATIN' THE
POLIS. CREEPY'S
RUNNEN THE
FENGER...

HARPER, DO AS I
SAY AND YOU'LL
SOON BE RUNNING
THE FINGER.

DON'T WORRY
ABOUT CREEPY. HE'S
IN A HAZARDOUS
OCCUPATION...

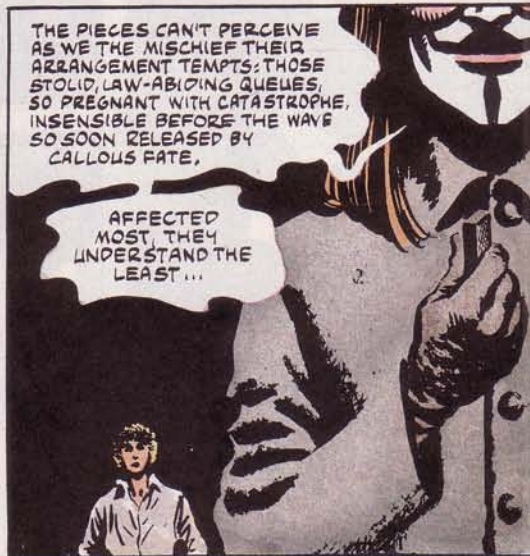


LOOK WHAT
HAPPENED TO HIS
PREDECESSOR.











"...AND UNDERSTANDING, WHEN IT COMES, INVARIABLY ARRIVES TOO LATE."

YOU SAY YOU
HAVE A CLOSMON,
WHO FEELS AND
LOVE CARES FOR YOU.
BUT I'VE READ
ALL HER DIARIES.
AND I KNOW THAT
SHE'S UNTRUE



INDEED, THEY'LL NOT KNOW ANYTHING'S AMISS UNTIL THEY'RE CAUGHT UP IN THAT TERRIBLE MOMENTUM, POSSIBLY MISTAKING IT AT FIRST FOR SOLO DECISIVE ACTION, SOME LAST MINUTE RALLY TO AVERT DISASTER, CHARGING TO THE RESCUE...



"...BUT THEY ARE NOT CHARGING."

"THEY ARE FALLING."



THERE ...

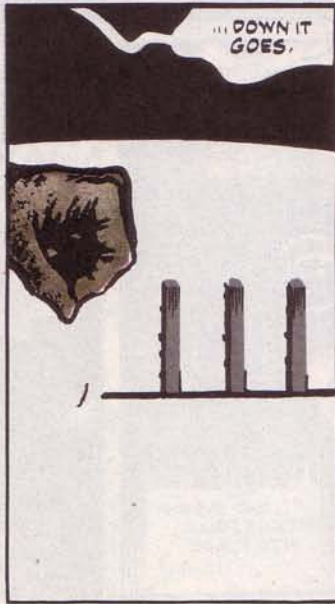
POOR LITTLE THINGS.

YOU SEE THEM? STANDING WITH THEIR NUMBERS ON THEIR BLANK, INDIFFERENT FACES, NUREMBERG IN MINIATURE, THE RANKS OF PAINTED, WOODEN MEN ...



"POOR DOMINOES."

"YOUR PRETTY EMPIRE TOOK SO LONG TO BUILD, NOW, WITH A SNAP OF HISTORY'S FINGERS..."



...DOWN IT GOES,





LEADER...



I KNOW.

THE
TERRORIST...
I KNOW HOW
HE'S DOING
IT ALL.



FIRST, HE KNOWS
EVERYTHING ABOUT
US AND OUR
SYSTEM.
EVERYTHING.



THEN, THIS
MORNING WE
FIND PEOPLE
WITH SUBVERSIVE
POEMS THEY
CLAIMED THEY'D
RECEIVED
THROUGH THE
POST.

LEADER,
HE'S GOT US
DELIVERING HIS
LEAFLETS
FOR HIM! HOW?



HOW IS HE CAUSING
BLACKOUTS IN MERSEY-
SIDE AND FOOD RIOTS
IN BRUM? I KNOW IT'S
UNTHINKABLE,
LEADER, BUT
THERE'S ONLY ONE
ANSWER:

HE'S
GOT ACCESS
TO FATE.

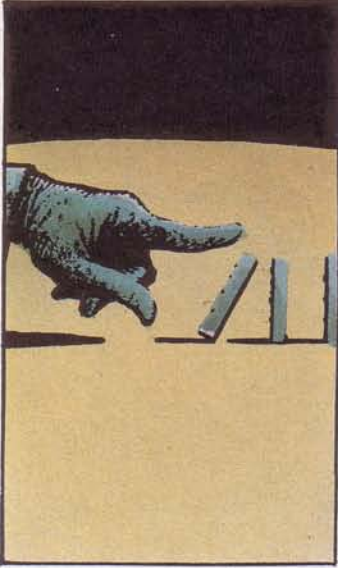
HE'S
HAD ACCESS
TO FATE SINCE
THE BEGINNING.

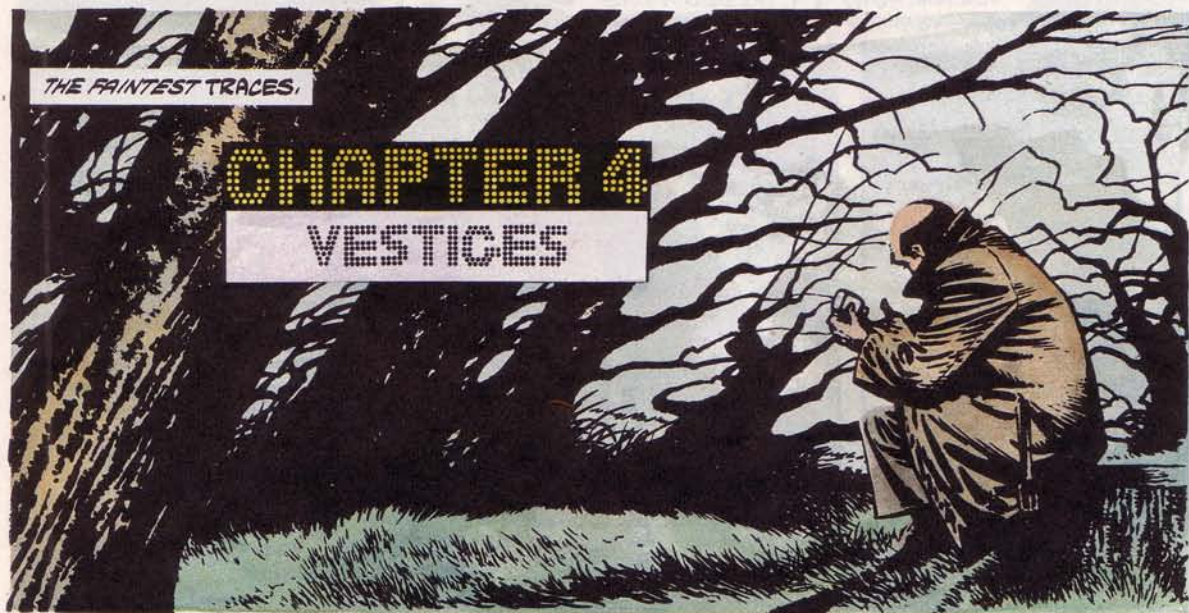
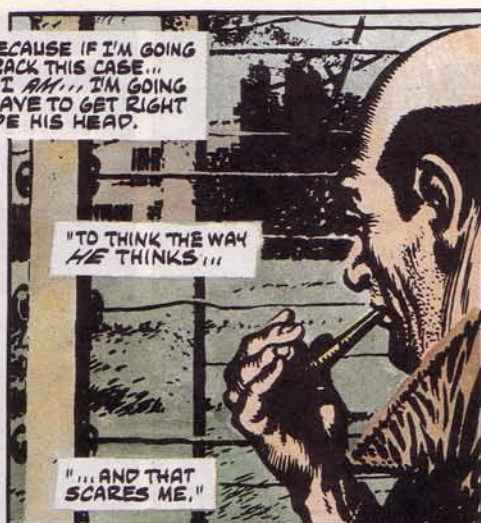


THAT'S HOW
HE, UH...

LEADER?

WHAT'S...?





I'VE NEVER SEEN THE CAMPS BEFORE, ONLY PHOTOGRAPHS. SO THIS IS THE TOILET WE FLUSHED ALL THOSE PEOPLE DOWN...



FOUR TABLETS. I WONDER IF THAT'S ENOUGH? I WONDER IF THAT'S TOO MANY?

OH WELL.

AGAINST MY TONGUE LIKE LITTLE PIECES OF SOAP... MY SALIVA TASTING OF TINFOIL... A BUBBLE OF APPREHENSION FORMING LOW IN MY STOMACH...



I SWALLOW, FEELING AS IF I'M LETTING GO OF SOMETHING.

THERE.

NOW I'M STRAPPED IN, COUNTDOWN TICKING FROM BOWEL TO BLOOD-STREAM TO BRAIN, TOWARDS TAKE-OFF, BUT I'VE NEVER FLOWN BEFORE. WHAT'S SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN?



NOTHING. NOTHING YET. BETTER TAKE A LOOK ROUND, WHILE IT'S LIGHT.

THESE MUST BE THE OVENS, OVENS FOR PEOPLE, PEOPLE OVENS...

NO. NO USE: STILL CAN'T MAKE IT SEEM REAL... IF I'D KNOWN THIS WAS HAPPENING, WOULD I STILL HAVE JOINED THE PARTY?



PROBABLY. NO BETTER ALTERNATIVES.

WE COULDN'T LET THE CHAOS AFTER THE WAR CONTINUE. ANY SOCIETY'S BETTER THAN THAT. WE NEEDED ORDER...



...OR AT LEAST, I DID. LOSING CYNTH AND LITTLE PAUL LIKE THAT. EVERYTHING WAS DISINTEGRATING AND I JUST WANTED...

...TO...



EUGH...



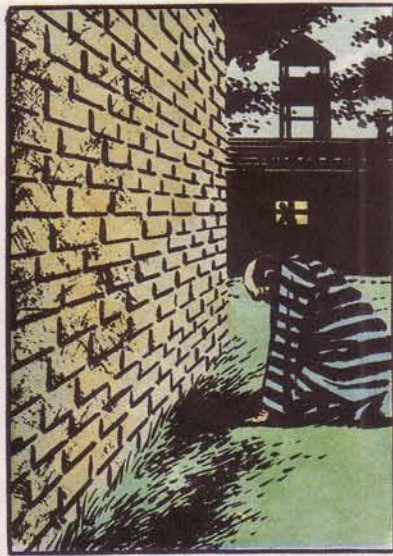
I SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE IT.

I SHOULDN'T HAVE TAKEN THE L.S.D.

NOT HERE.









OH ERIC, LOOK AT YOU IN YOUR PYJAMAS! GO BACK TO BED. I'M JUST MAKING BACON AND EGGS TO KEEP YOUR STRENGTH UP.

DELIA?

DELIA, I'M SO MIXED UP IF I COULD JUST GET THINGS STRAIGHT...



WHAT THINGS?

WHAT I'M DOING HERE, WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME...

I REMEMBER THAT I CAME HERE TO FIND SOMETHING OUT... SOMETHING VERY VITAL TO VARIOUS VENTURES... I WAS PLANNING TO TAKE A DRUG...



A DRUG? WELL, THAT'S WHAT I'M HERE FOR. PLEASE ROLL UP YOUR SLEEVE...

...AS FOR YOUR EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS, PERHAPS YOU SHOULD TALK TO TONY LILLIMAN, HE'S OUR PADRE.

LILLIMAN? I THOUGHT HE WAS A BISHOP?



NO, MERELY A PAWN.

NOW, TELL ME: WHEN DID YOU STOP BELIEVING IN GOD?



B-BUT... I NEVER SAID...

DON'T MOLLYCODDLE HIM! BLESSED SKY-PILOTS! NOTHING WRONG WITH HIM A SHOT OF JUNGLE-JUICE WON'T CURE, EH?



HMM, YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT. IN MY EXPERIENCE, POISON SOLVES MOST OF LIFE'S PROBLEMS...

HE'S FINISHED HERE, MR. PROTHERO, HE'S YOURS.

WHAT...? DELIA, THEY'RE TAKING ME AWAY! DON'T LET THEM...



COME ON, MATEY. DON'T MAKE ME MAD.

DELIA?

DELIA, WHAT ABOUT THE BACON AND EGGS?

...IN NOMINI PATRI, ET FILII, ET SPIRITUS SANCTI...



DELIA, PLEASE, YOU WEREN'T LIKE THEM. I KNOW YOU WEREN'T. YOU HAD A HEART. PLEASE DON'T LET THEM DO THIS.

DELIA, ARE YOU LISTENING? I...



OH NO.



HOW DID I GET
HERE, TO THIS
STINKING PLACE;
MY JOB, MY LIFE;
MY CONSCIENCE;
MY PRISON ...



AND YES, IT'S
JUST THE
DRUGS, BUT...

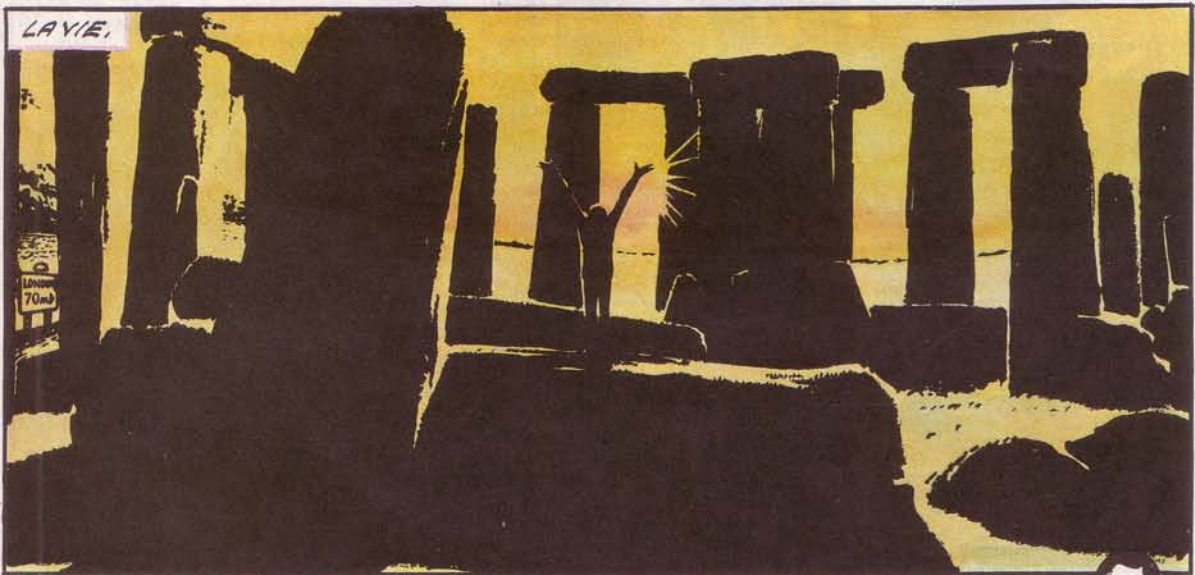
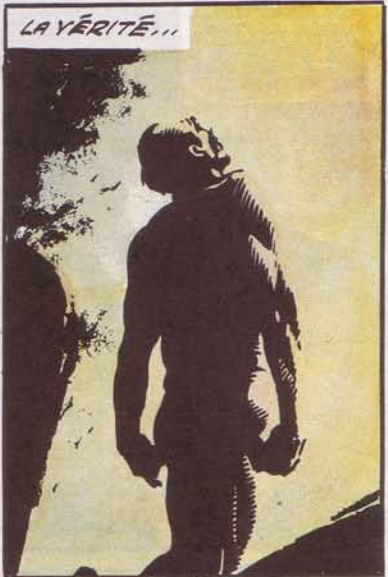
BUT HE WAS DRUGGED
TOO, LOCKED AWAY TO
DIE, AND HE REACHED
SOME UNDERSTANDING.



WHO IMPRISONED
ME HERE?
WHO KEEPS
ME HERE?

WHO CAN RELEASE
ME? WHO'S
CONTROLLING AND
CONSTRAINING MY
LIFE, EXCEPT...







CHAPTER V
THE VALEDICTION





MOST INSURRECTION'S CLAMOUR, WE MAY EASILY FORGET JUST WHAT IT IS FOR WHICH WE STRIVE...

ISN'T IT DANCING? SCENTED SHOULDERS? PUPILS WIDENED BY DESIRE OR WINE?

ANARCHY MUST EMBRACE THE DIN OF BOMBS AND CANNON-FIRE...



"...YET ALWAYS MUST IT LOVE SWEET MUSIC MORE."



"...BUT HOW STRANGE... THE CHANGE... FROM MA-JOR TO MI-NOR..."

NO, I STILL CAN'T GET THAT LAST BIT.



PERSEVERE, EYE, UNDERSTANDING MUSIC, WE MAY HEAR THE MUSIC THAT THERE IS IN LIFE, FROM ITS FIRST INSUFFICIENT TRILLS...

...UNTO ITS CLOSING MINOR CHORDS.



SO LET ME SEE...

OH, I GET IT. THOSE THREE ROOMS UPSTAIRS ARE JOINED WITH THE PIANO ROOM BELOW.

INDEED. IMAGINE WE'RE INSIDE YOUR MIND, EACH AREA WITH ITS SKILLS AND FUNCTIONS: KNOWLEDGE, PLEASURE, CREATIVITY...



ALL THAT REMAINS, THEN, IS TO MAKE THE PROPER NEURAL CONNECTIONS.

UP THERE, THE HIGHER ATTRIBUTES OF REASON, LOVE AND CULTURE ARE CONTAINED.

DOWN HERE THE SHADOW GALLERY HAS EYES.

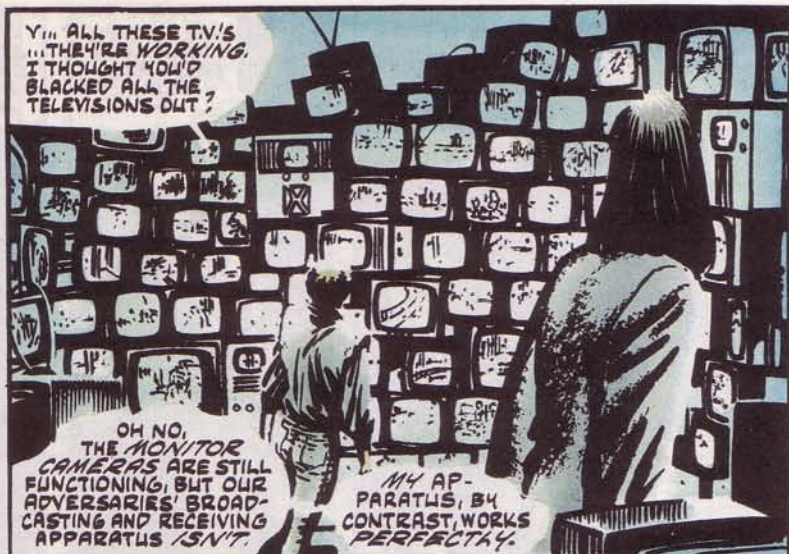


WAIT. LET ME GET MY BEARINGS. MY ROOM'S ON THIS LEVEL, OFF THE OTHER STAIRCASE, SOMEWHERE OVER THERE? IS THAT RIGHT?

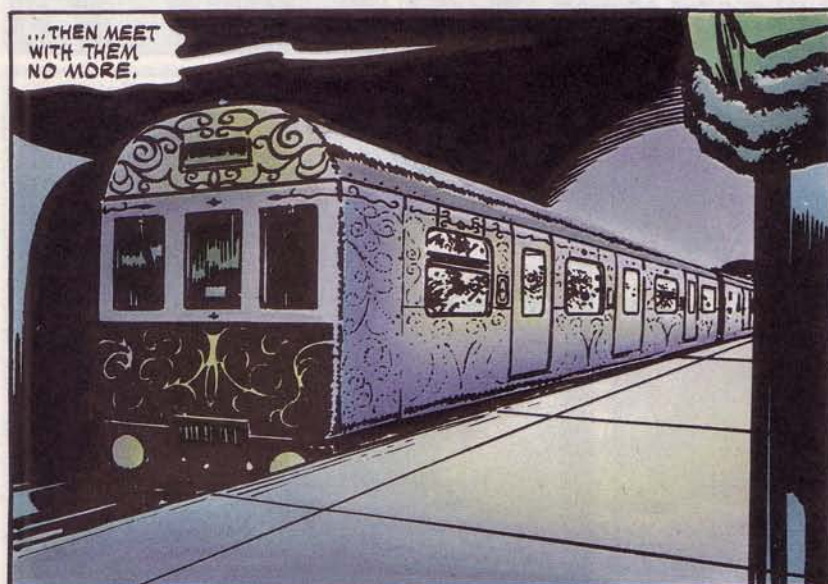
UNERRINGLY.



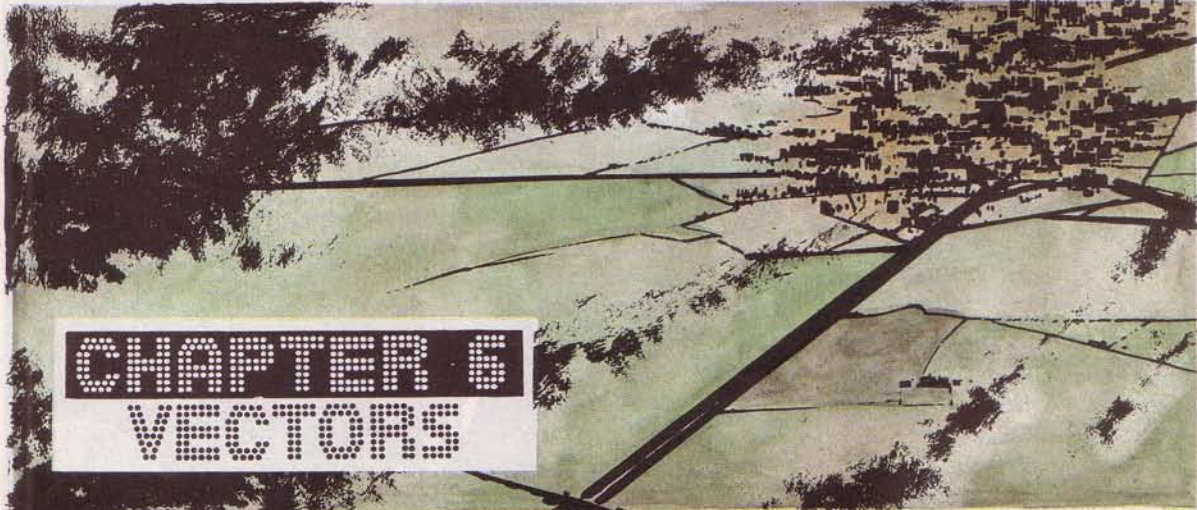
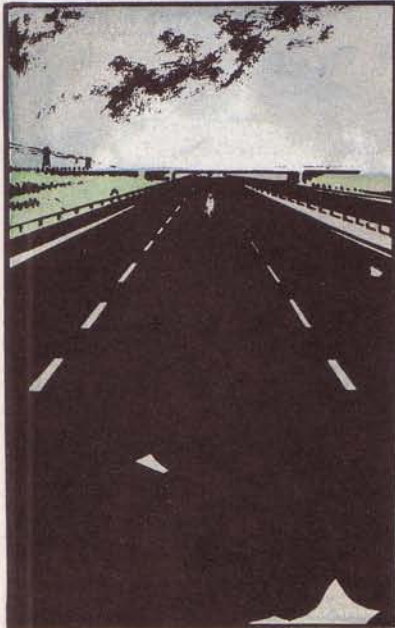
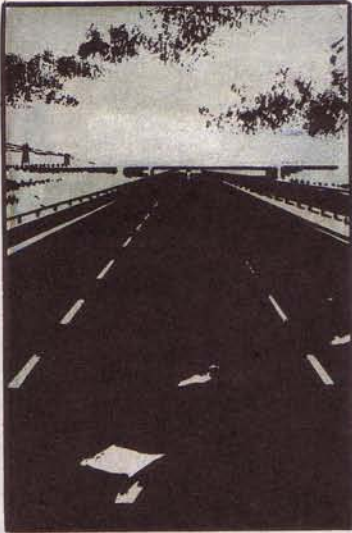
BUT COME... HERE'S SOMETHING THAT YOU'VE NEVER SEEN...











CHAPTER 6
VECTORS

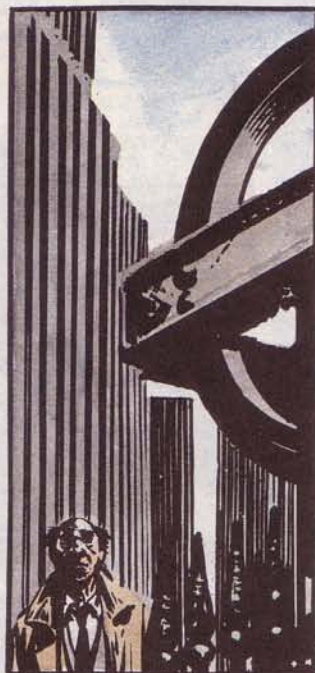


























OOUGH...



BLOOD.



FLESH AND BLOOD AFTER ALL...

I KILLED YOU, YOU MONSTER...



I KILLED YOU!







DO... DO YOU THINK HE'S REALLY DEAD? THE TERRORIST, LIKE FINCH SAID?

FINCH IS HALF OUT OF HIS MIND ON DRUGS, BY ALL ACCOUNTS. STILL, HE'S A BORING, RELIABLE LITTLE MAN...

HE PROBABLY DID IT.

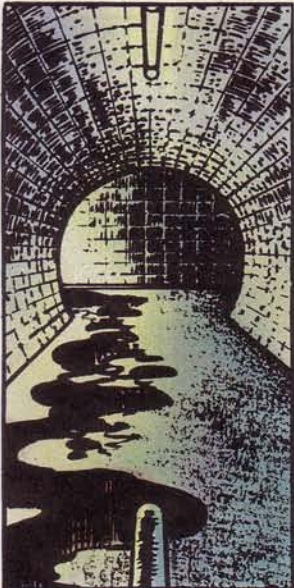


PARCEL ARRIVED FOR YOU, MR. HEYER.

HM? OH... THANK YOU...

THE QUESTION IS, WHAT NEXT? THE ASSASSINATION'S TAKEN US ALL BY SURPRISE. RIGHT NOW, THIS COUNTRY'S A POLITICAL VACUUM.

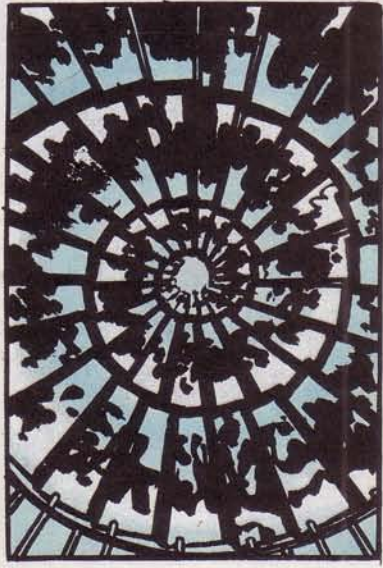
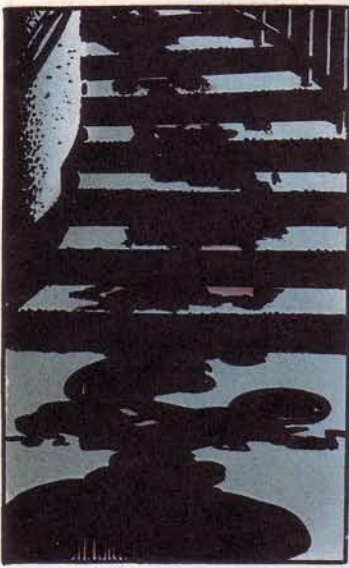
NOBODY'S IN CHARGE.



OF COURSE, CREEDEY THINKS HE IS. I HOPE HE ENJOYS THE FEELING WHILE IT LASTS.

THINGS NEED ARRANGING, SO I'LL SEE YOU TONIGHT, AND WHO KNOWS, YOU LUCKY BOY...

... BY 70-NIGHT, I MIGHT BE IN QUITE A GOOD MOOD.







LOOK... HERE IT IS.
IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE
HIDDEN, BUT YOU
CAN SEE THE
LENS.

EVERY
PARTY MEMBER'S
BEDROOM HAS
ONE, EVEN HIS
OWN!

AND HE
WONDERS
WHY I WON'T
LET HIM
TOUCH ME.

OF COURSE, NONE
OF HIS SPY CAMERAS
ARE WORKING
NOW.

THERE HE
SITS AT WORK
AMIDST ALL THE
FUSS OF THIS PARADE
AND ALL HIS LITTLE
SCREENS
ARE DEAD.

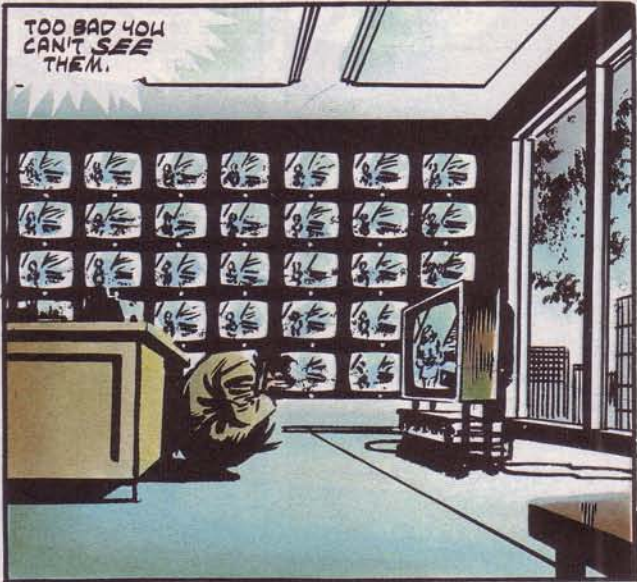
A BLIND
YOYEUR. HA!



HERE
THEY ARE,
CONRAD.



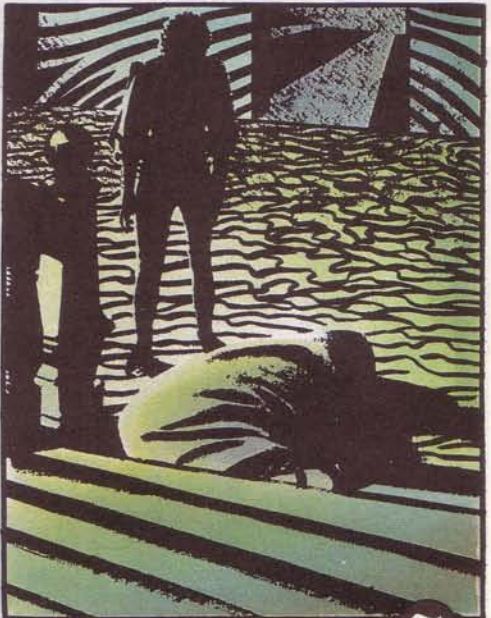
HERE'S WHAT
YOU'RE
MISSING.

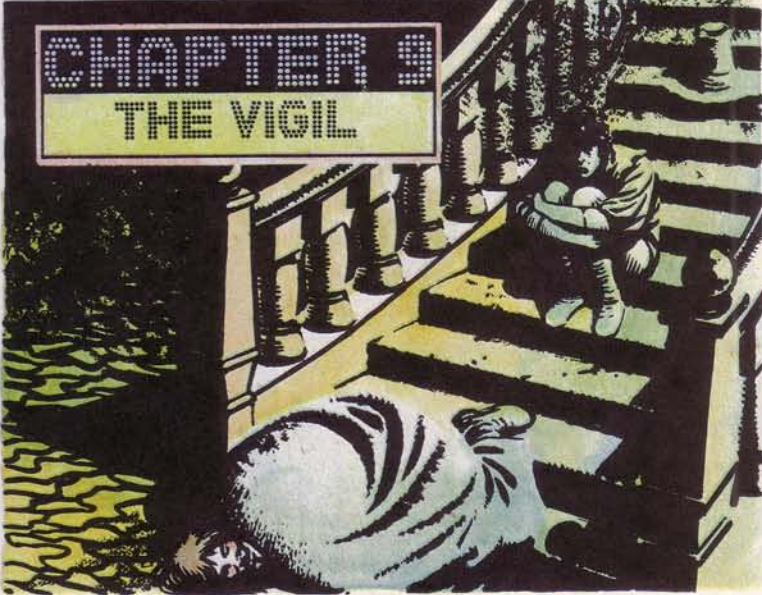


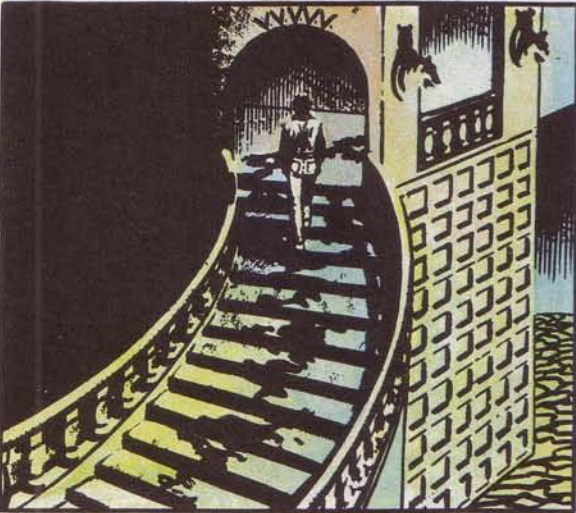
TOO BAD YOU
CAN'T SEE
THEM.



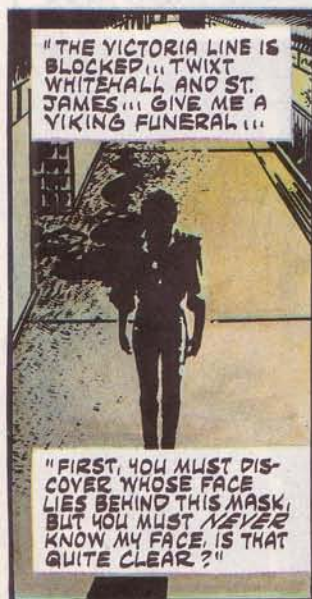














SO,
DEAD
THEN.

OH CHRIST, WHAT
HAPPENS NEXT?
YOU NEVER SAID,
YOU NEVER SAID,
WHAT YOU WERE
EDUCATING ME
FOR.

YOU NEVER TOLD
ME WHAT I'M
SUPPOSED TO DO,



ALL RIGHT.

ALL RIGHT,
THEN,
WHAT I DO
IS THIS:

I WALK
TOWARDS THE
BODY, VERY
QUIETLY, VERY
REVERENTLY ...



... AND I STOOP
DOWN, MY FINGERS
STRUGGLE CLIMBING
WITH ELASTICATED
STRAPS ...

... AND THEN I TAKE
OFF THE MASK ...



NO.

NO, THAT
ISN'T WHAT
I DO.



WHAT I DO IS, IN
TEARS I STUMBLE
OVER TO THE CORPSE.

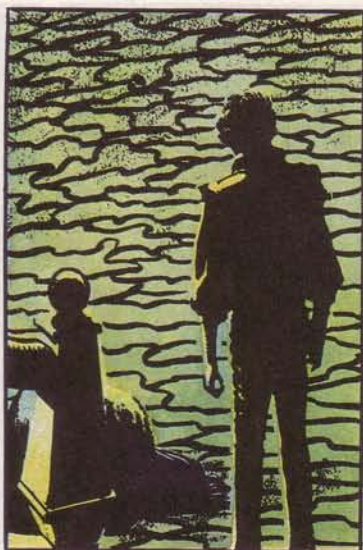
IT'S SLIPPERY WITH
BLOOD BENEATH MY
FINGERS, BUT I TEAR
THE MASK ASIDE, AND ...

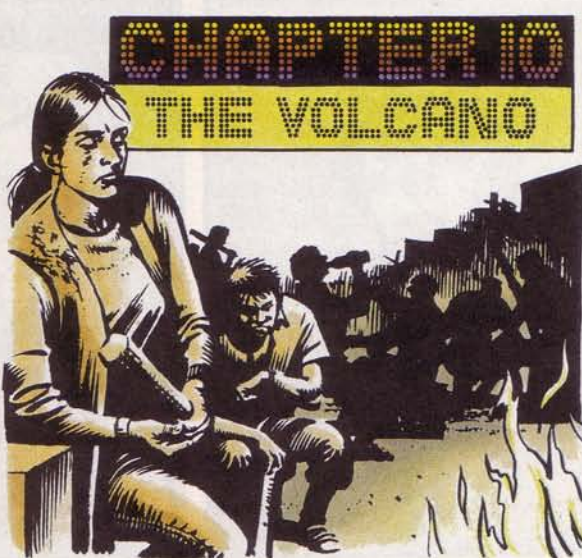


NO.

NO, THAT'S
NOT IT.













OH,



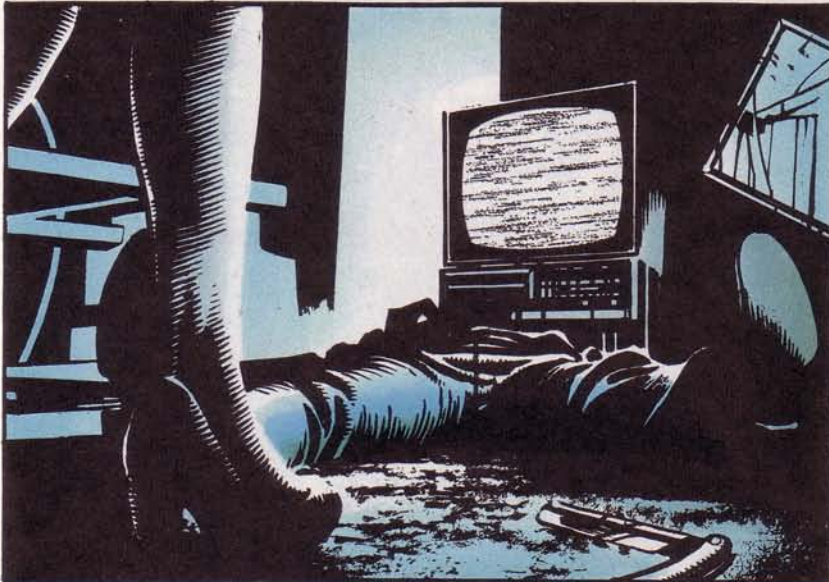
SO YOU FINALLY
SHOWED UP I'VE
BEEN ROUND HALF
LONDON LOOKING
FOR YOU.

WELL, YOU
CAN PULL YOUR
TROUSERS BACK
UP AND PISS OFF.
CONRAD'S HOME
IN AN HOUR.



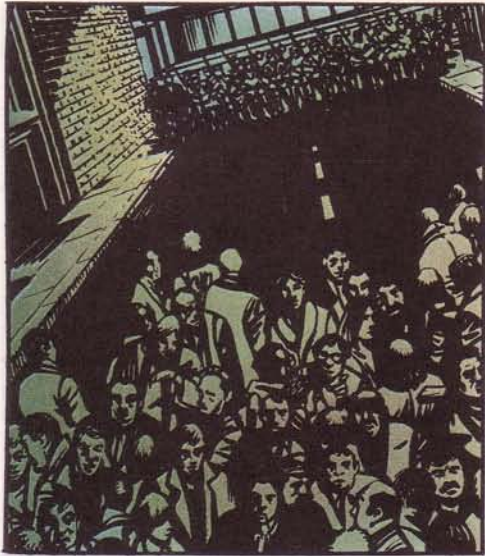
AT LEAST
NOBODY HAS SEEN
CREEPY SINCE TEA-
TIME, WHICH PROBABLY
INDICATES YOU'VE
DONE SOME-
THING RIGHT
AT LEAST.

BUT IF
YOU THINK
THAT ENTITLES
YOU TO...



H- HELEN...?





ME? SENIOR AUTHORITY? WELL, WHERE'S CREEPY, FOR GOD'S SAKE? HE SHOULD BE HANDLING THIS.

I SHOULDN'T WORRY, SIR, THEY'LL PROBABLY GIVE UP AND GO HOME AT MID-NIGHT, ONCE THEY ACCEPT THE TERROR-IST'S DEAD.

IT'S NEARLY TWELVE NOW!!!

AH, THERE YOU ARE, SIR.

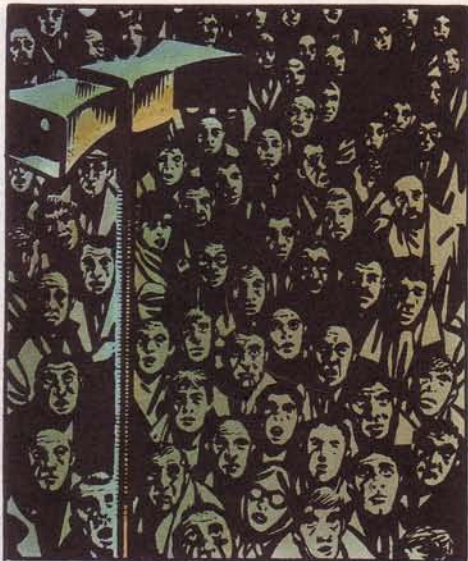
THERE'S BIG BEN STRIKING THE HOUR NOW.

LOYELY, REASSURING SOUND, DON'T YOU THINK, SIR?

UH, YES, YES, I SUPPOSE I...

WAIT A MINUTE!!!

BIG BEN WAS BLOWN UP TWELVE MONTHS AGO.

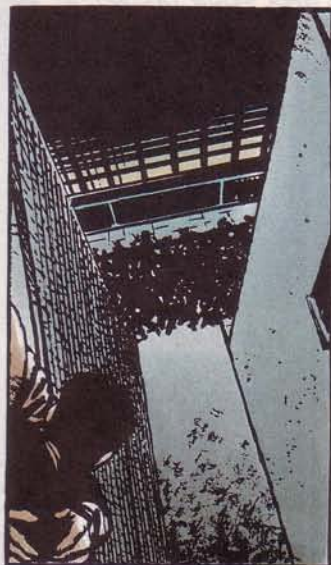


THE SPEAKERS! THAT MEANS IT'S COMING FROM THE SPEAKERS! SOMEONE MUST...

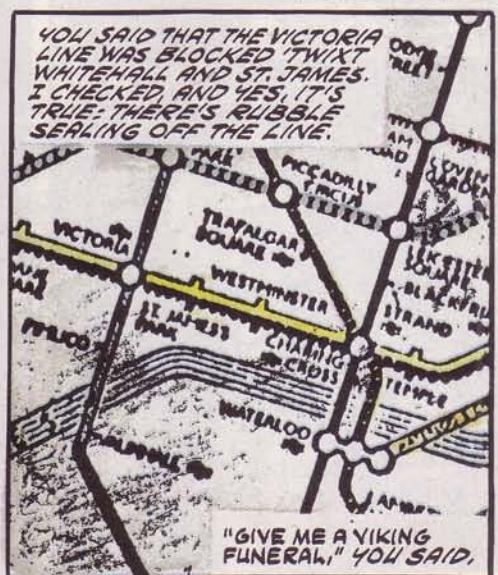
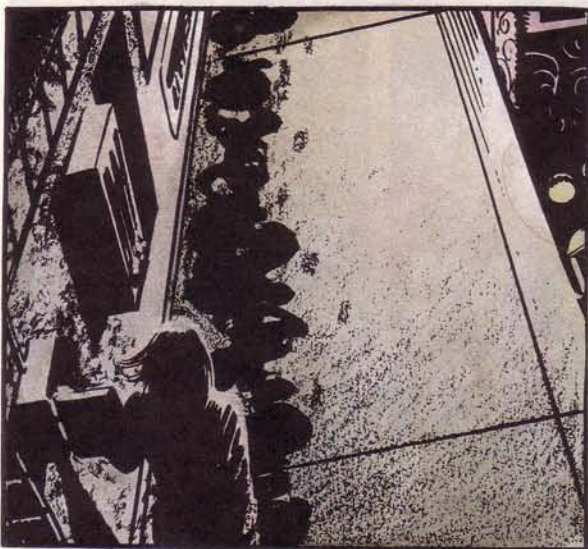
TO HAVE...



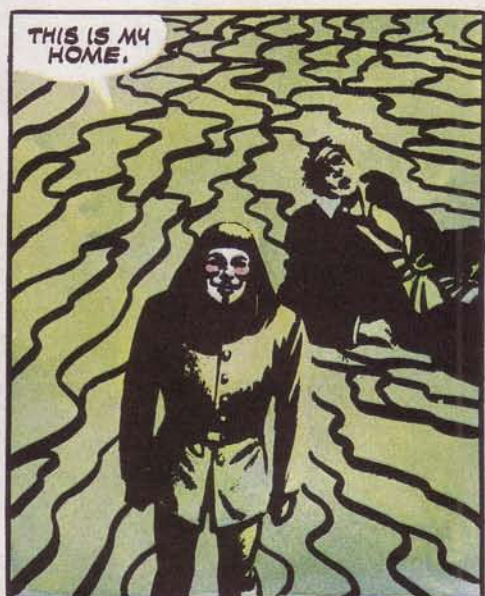


















Blah, Entered: some mad.

on the Companion plot
I've got a couple of books a
re niger, too. Well see how it all

shaper up. See if
you library has
any. It's a fascinating
story, you know. And
it hasn't been done
justice by anyone. Maybe
there is an anti-industrial
story - like I say below.

Do you know I
can't find a City Fakes
much anymore! I've read all sorts of
places. I'm still looking and I might find
one eventually. In the meantime I had
to make do up...

I'm in for with this City Fakes idea
but it for any reason, we decide against
it. I'm prepared to do whatever you'd
like to come up with. See, there are
advantages and disadvantages in every
G.F. A combined advantage and
disadvantage is to find that he's
a wholly British figure. That's
great for establishing him as a
great exclusive, which Dez would
like, but has from the
point of view of
selling to outside
markets.

And something
else: Supposing

(by some freak of nature)
that this strip means immensely
success. Do you realize that by
transforming the image of City Fakes
we are tampering with a British
institution. What do we actually

shaping public consciousness in a
way which some Conservative politicians
might regard as subversive! What go in
the telephone tapping list! But that's all
as funny as it sounds...

I'm excited and
delighted by that prospect at the same time, however
displeased the scenario might be.
Ship City: Good for US appeal, right?
Good City: That's how to rig the hand.
Logical: In the end, it
implies that the first City was lost.
You and me - thought.
Ready you.

BEHIND THE PAINTED SMILE

The following article first appeared in *Warrior Magazine* (#17) during the original run of *V FOR VENDETTA* in 1983. Because the article appeared while the series was in the midst of its run, Alan Moore discusses *V FOR VENDETTA* as a "work-in-progress," and some of the aspects of the project changed before its conclusion after its lengthy hiatus. The article is presented here as a unique behind-the-scenes look at the creation of this powerful series, illustrated with many of the David Lloyd sketches which accompanied the original article, as well as Lloyd's cover paintings from the first DC Comics run of *V FOR VENDETTA*.

There's one at every convention or comic mart or work-in or signing, always one nervous and naive young novice who, during a lull in the questions-and-

answers session will raise one fluttering hand aloft and enquire, tremulously, "Where do you get your ideas from?" And do you know what we do? We sneer. We lampoon and

ridicule the snivelling little oaf before his peers, we degrade and humiliate him utterly and rend him into bloodied slivers with our implacable and caustic wit. We imply that even to have voiced such a question places him irretrievably in the same intellectual category as the common pencil-sharpener. Then, when we've wrung every last sadistic laugh out of this pitiful little blot, we have the bailiffs take him outside and work him over. No, I know it isn't nice. But all the same, it's something that we have to do.

The reason why we have to do it is pretty straightforward. Firstly, in the dismal and confused sludge of opinion and half-truth that make up all artistic theory and criticism, it is the only question worth asking. Secondly, we don't know the answer and we're scared that



somebody will find out.

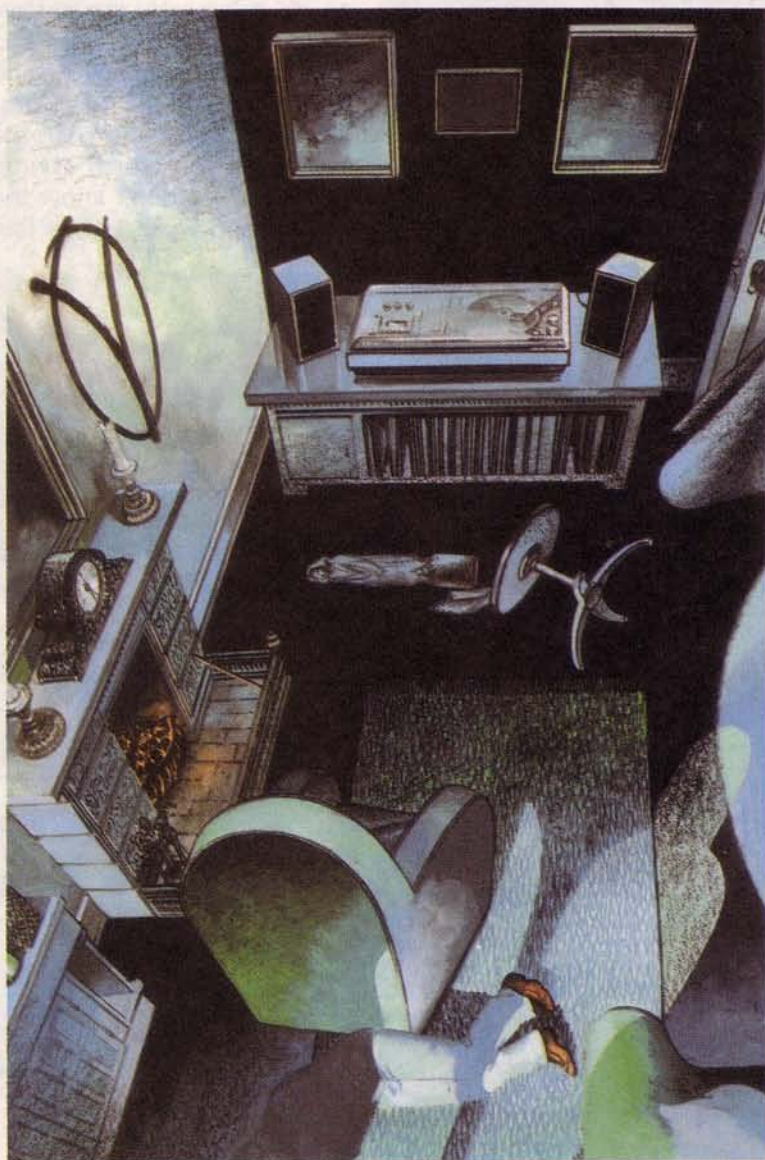
One thing that Dave Lloyd and I get asked quite a lot is "Where did the idea for V come from?"

Well, all right. It's a fair question. We've talked it over amongst ourselves, and we both feel that it deserves an answer, if only to make up for the cryptic and unpleasant way we've behaved in the past. The only problem is that we don't really remember. I recall that it was myself who came up with all the good ideas while Dave can produce eight sworn wit-

nesses who'll testify that it was him.

Luckily, we do still have a certain amount of documentation going back to the period when *Warrior* was still in the planning stages. Being as objective as I possibly can, I intend to rearrange these fragments into a fabulous and intricate mosaic that will once and for all lay bare the inner mysteries of the human creative process without prejudice or favour.

But it was still me who had all the good ideas.



V FOR VENDETTA started out partly in the Marvel UK *Hulk Weekly* and partly in an idea that I submitted to a D.C. Thomson's Scriptwriter Talent Competition when I was a tender 22 years old. My idea concerned a freakish terrorist in white-face makeup who traded under the name of "The Doll" and waged war upon a Totalitarian State sometime in the late 1980s. D.C. Thomson decided a transsexual terrorist wasn't quite what they were looking for and wisely opted for an entry submitted by a greengrocer from Hull entitled "Battler Bunn (He Bombs The Hun!)" or something very similar. Thus faced with rejection, I did what any serious artist would do. I gave up.

Shortly thereafter, the aforementioned *Hulk Weekly* began to appear on the stands as part of the Marvel Revolution being delivered by Dez Skinn in his new job as chief of British Marvel. The contents included Steve Parkhouse, Paul Neary and John Stokes' reworking of "The Black Knight" into a framework of Celtic legend, Steve Moore and Steve Dillon's interpretation of "Nick Fury, Agent of S.H.I.E.L.D.," and a little gem of a thirties mystery strip called "Nightraven," being written by Steve Parkhouse and drawn by Dave Lloyd with John Bolton bringing up the rear. It was a good strip and it won Eagle Awards. Thus, according to the comic book equivalent of Murphy's Law, it went down the tubes with alarming rapidity.

"Nightraven" vanished from the comic, Dez Skinn vanished from Marvel, *Hulk Weekly* vanished from the shops, spring turned to winter, leaves fell from the calendar and all of those other things that they do in films to indicate the passage

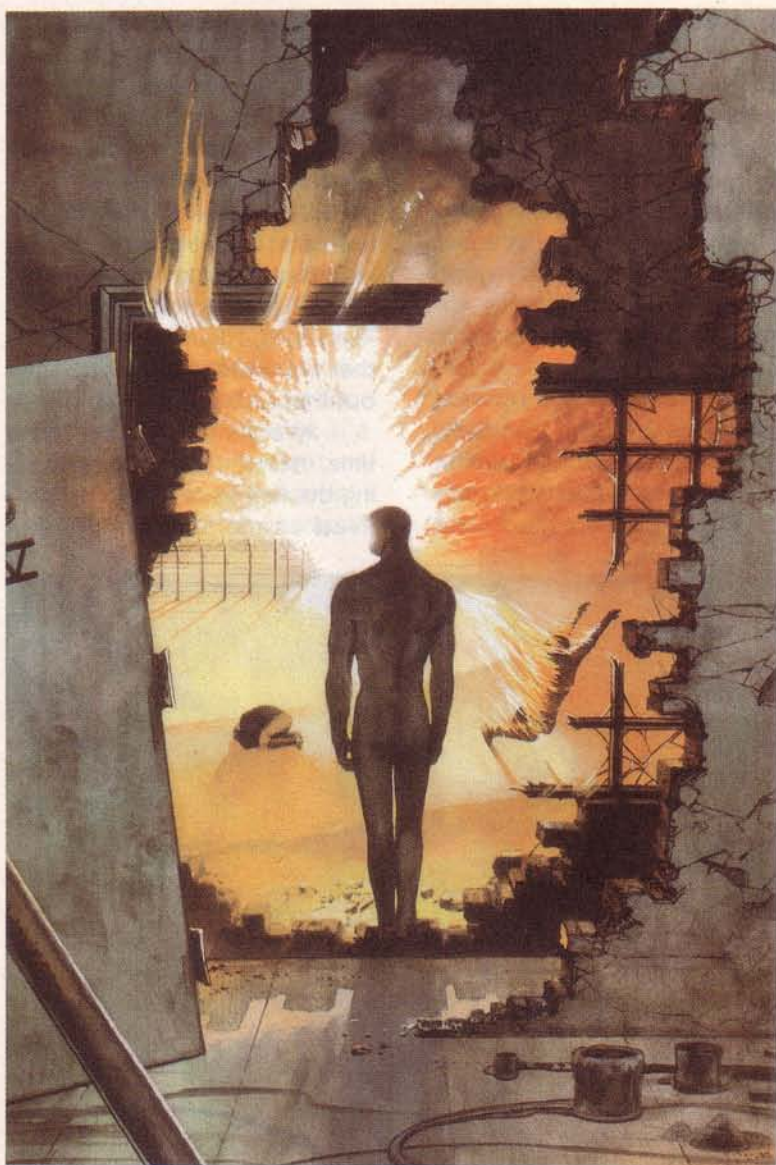
of time. While all this was going on, I was hiding under the bed and sobbing, trying desperately to get over my crushing rejection at the hands of D.C. Thomson. Things looked bleak.

Finally the 1980s rolled round and with them the first whispers of *Warrior*. Dez, now ensconced up in Studio System, had decided he wanted to be involved in comics again. So he gathered together some of the best artists and writers he had worked with in the past. These included Dave Lloyd, who was asked to create a new thirties mystery strip.

When Dave was given the mystery strip, he decided that while he had plenty of ideas upon how it should be handled visually, the mechanics of plot and characterization were, for the moment, beyond him. Since the two of us had worked happily upon a couple of back-up strips in *Doctor Who Monthly*, he suggested me as writer. At this point the telephone conversations that were to financially cripple both of us began, along with the voluminous (and, where Dave was concerned, indecipherable) correspondence that we needed in order to trade ideas and knock this thing into shape. In other words, this is the point where it gets confusing.

Given the original brief, my first ideas centered around a new way of approaching the thirties pulp-adventure strip. I came up with a character called "Vendetta," who would be set in a realistic thirties world that drew upon my own knowledge of the Gangster era, bolstered by lots of good, solid research. I sent the idea off to Dave.

His response was that he was sick to the back teeth of doing good solid research and if he was called upon to draw



one more '28 model Dusenberger he'd eat his arm. This presented a serious problem.

Mulling over the difficulty, I began to give some consideration as to what it actually was that made Pulp Magazine Adventures work. Obviously, a lot of it was rooted in the exotic and glamorous locations that the stories were set in... seedy waterfront bars, plush penthouses dripping with girls, stuff like that. All the magic of a vanished age. It struck me that it might be possible to get the

same effect by placing the story in the near future as opposed to the near past. If we handled it right, we could create the same sense of mingled exoticism and familiarity without Dave having to spend hours of his working time arguing with harassed-looking assistants at the reference library. Dave and Dez both liked the idea, and so we were off.

The next problem was the creation of the main character and the actual setting for the strip. Since Dave and I both wanted to do something that

would be uniquely British rather than emulate the vast amount of American material on the market, the setting was obviously going to be England. Furthermore, since both Dave and myself share a similar brand of political pessimism, the future would be pretty grim, bleak and totalitarian, thus giving us a convenient antagonist to play our hero off against.

Not unnaturally, I recalled my original idea for "The Doll" and submitted a rough outline to Dave. It was a pretty conventional thing, really, and little

more than predictable comic book fare with a few nice touches. It had the sort of grim, hi-tech world that you could seek in books like *Fahrenheit 451* or, more recently, in films like *Blade Runner*. It had robots, uniformed riot police of the kneepads and helmets variety and all that other good stuff. Reading it, I think we both felt that we were onto something, but that sadly this wasn't it.

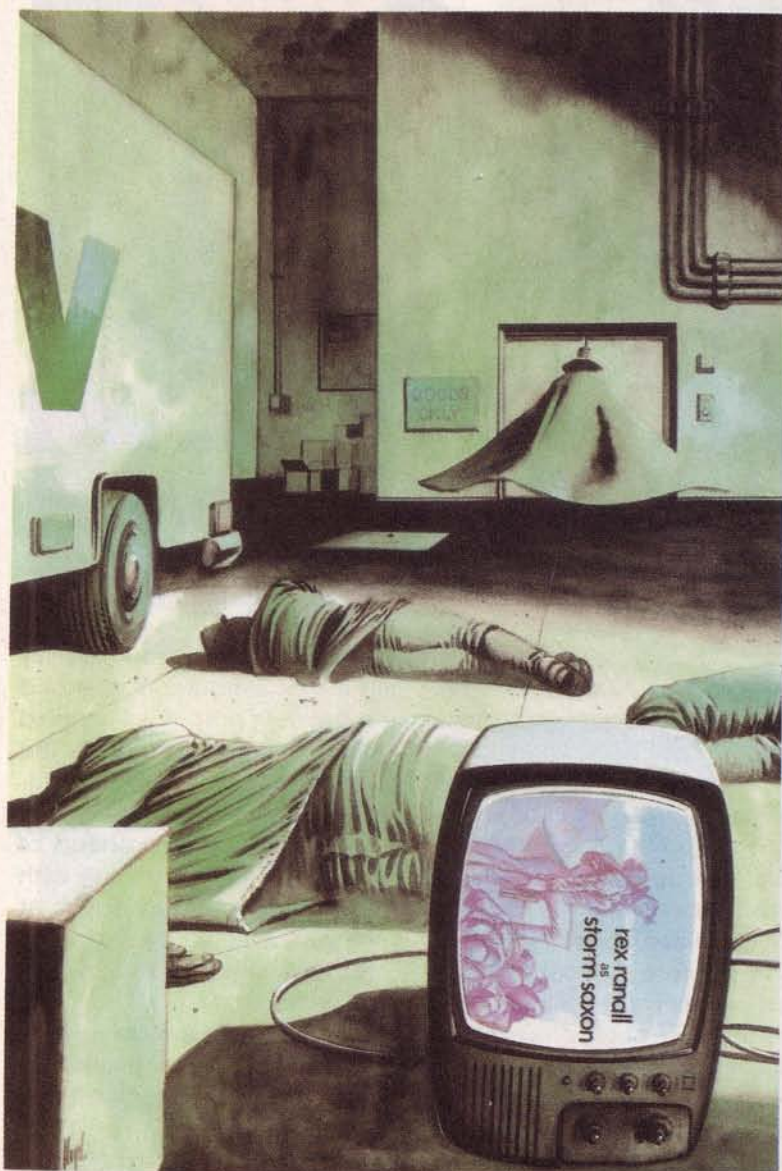
At around about the same time, Never, Ltd. were preparing the first issue of their short-lived comic magazine *Pssst*.

Dave had submitted a strip-sample that he'd come up with by himself entitled "Falconbridge" featuring a freedom fighter named Evelina Falconbridge and an art style that was a radical departure from the stuff he'd been doing on *Doctor Who* and *Hulk Weekly*. *Pssst* rejected it, certain that the future of comics lay in short experimental pieces rather than in continuing characters.

For my part, when I looked at it I found it potentially exciting. Dave was obviously on the verge of something splendid here, and I very much wanted to be part of it. That said, all we really had was a lot of unusable ideas flying back and forth through the aether and nothing very tangible as a result of it. One night, in desperation, I made a long list of concepts that I wanted to reflect in *V*, moving from one to another with a rapid free-association that would make any good psychiatrist reach for the emergency cord. The list was something as follows:

Orwell. Huxley. Thomas Disch. *Judge Dredd*. Harlan Ellison's "Repent, Harlequin!" Said the Ticktockman." "Catman" and "Prowler in the City at the Edge of the World" by the same author. Vincent Price's *Dr. Phibes* and *Theatre Of Blood*. David Bowie. The Shadow. Nightraven. Batman. *Fahrenheit 451*. The writings of the *New Worlds* school of science fiction. Max Ernst's painting "Europe After The Rains." Thomas Pynchon. The atmosphere of British Second World War films. *The Prisoner*. Robin Hood. Dick Turpin...

There was some element in all of these that I could use, but try as I might I couldn't come up with a coherent whole from such disjointed parts. I'm



sure that it's a feeling that all artists and writers are familiar with... the sensation of there being something incredibly good just beyond your fingertips. It's frustrating and infuriating and you either fold up in despair or just carry on. Against my usual inclinations, I decided to just carry on.

Along with all this, we were also stuck for a name for the character. I'd abandoned the "Vendetta" idea without a thought along with the concept it related to, and was struggling with a morass of names including such forgettables as "The Ace of Shades" amongst others. While by no means my major preoccupation, it was another annoying buzz in the back of my head to add to all the rest. Meanwhile, lost for a character, I proceeded to at least try to work the world into some sort of shape, creating a believable landscape for the 1990's setting that we'd decided upon.

This proved a lot easier. Starting with the assumption that the Conservatives would obviously lose the 1983 elections, I began to work out a future based upon the Labour Party gaining power, removing all American missiles from British soil and thus preventing Britain from becoming a major target in the event of a nuclear war. With disturbingly little difficulty it was easy for me to plot the course from that point up until the Fascist takeover in the post-holocaust Britain of the 1990's.

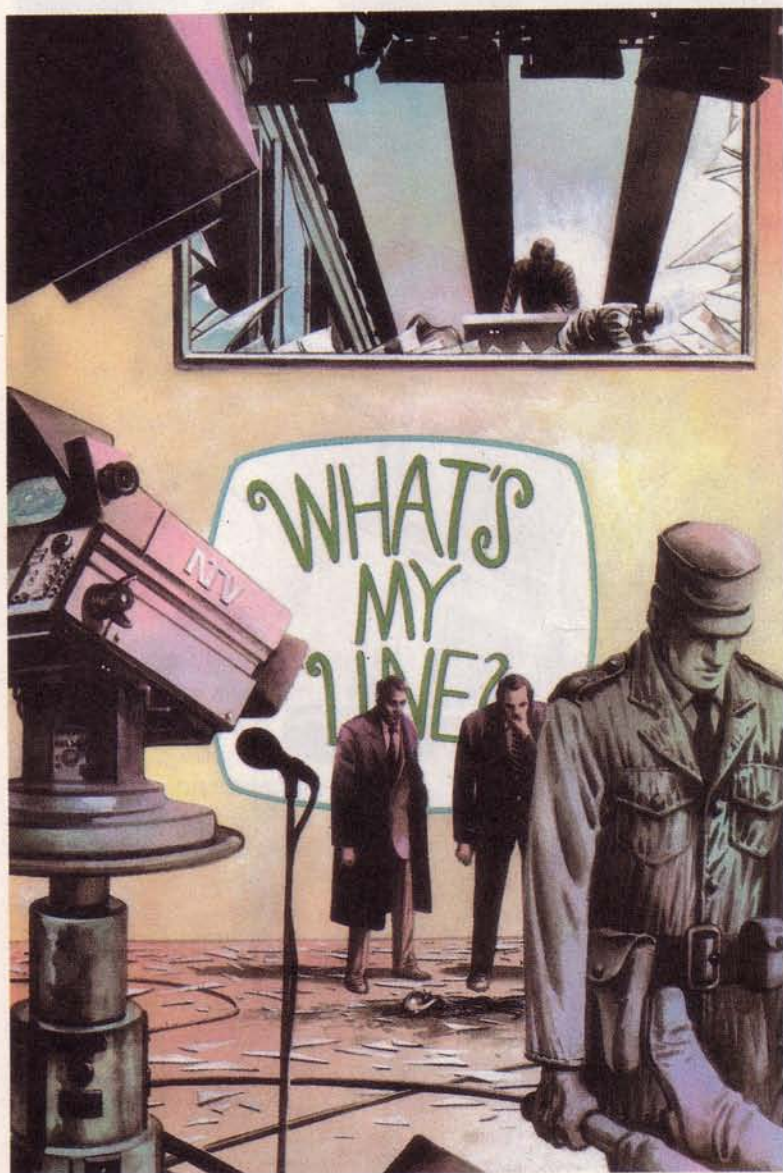
It was sometime around this point that Dez rang up and informed us that Graham Marsh (his partner at Studio System) and he had come up with the perfect title for the proposed strip, said title being "V for Vendetta." (Dez hadn't been privy to our thoughts about the thirties strip and had just arrived

at the name by pure blind coincidence.) We took this as a sign from the gods, and so "V for Vendetta" it was. Funnily enough, having an actual title to focus on gave us a fresh incentive to work out the rest of the strip, which we now applied ourselves to with a vengeance.

I revised my original notes, coming up with the idea that the central character could be some sort of escapee, psychologically altered by his stay in a Government Concentration Camp. For personal reasons, I had decided to set the camp at

Larkhill in Wiltshire, site of both an existing army camp and one of the most truly horrendous hitch-hiking holidays I've ever had in my entire life. I'll tell you about it some other time.

Dave, meanwhile, was coming up with character designs and story ideas to see if any of them tickled our creative fancy. One of his notions was that the lead character would perhaps operate clandestinely within the existing police force, subverting it from within. To this end, Dave designed a costume based upon a variation in the



way he saw police uniforms of the 1990s. It had a big "V" on the front formed from the belts and straps attached to the uniform, and while it looked nice, I think both Dave and I were uneasy about falling into such a straightforward super-hero cliché with what we saw as having the potential for being something utterly fresh and different.

The big breakthrough was all Dave's, much as it sickens me to admit it. More remarkable still, it was all contained in one single letter that he'd dashed

off the top of his head and which, like most of Dave's handwriting, needed the equivalent of a Rosetta Stone to actually interpret. I transcribe the relevant portions beneath:

"Re. The script: While I was writing this, I had this idea about the hero, which is a bit redundant now we've got [can't read the next bit] but nonetheless... I was thinking, why don't we portray him as a resurrected Guy Fawkes, complete with one of those papier mâché masks, in a cape and conical hat? He'd look *really*



bizarre and it would give Guy Fawkes the image he's deserved all these years. We shouldn't burn the chap every Nov. 5th but *celebrate* his attempt to blow up Parliament!"

The moment I read these words, two things occurred to me. Firstly, Dave was obviously a lot less sane than I'd hitherto believed him to be, and secondly, this was the best idea I'd ever heard in my entire life. All of the various fragments in my head suddenly fell into place, united behind the single image of a Guy Fawkes mask. Brain reeling, I read on.

Elsewhere in the same letter, Dave was giving me his ideas as to how he actually wanted to approach the strip in terms of layout and execution. These included the absolute banning of sound effects, and, as an afterthought, the utter eradication of thought balloons into the bargain. As a writer, this terrified me. I wasn't so much bothered about the sound effects, but without thought balloons, how was I going to get over all the nuances of character that I needed to make the book satisfying on a literary



level? All the same, there was something about the discipline of the idea that fascinated me, and while dropping off to sleep at night I'd find it nagging away somewhere in the recesses of my cerebral swamp.

A couple of days later, I wrote back to Dave telling him that the Guy Fawkes idea was definitely *it*, that not only would we do without thought balloons and sound effects but I was prepared to get rid of most of the caption boxes as well and just rely entirely on pictures and dialogue.

In the history of any strip or book or whatever, this is the moment where you get your real reward... the moment when all of the half-ideas and idiocies gel into something that is much more than the sum of its parts and thus entirely unexpected and utterly beautiful.

Now that we had the centre of the strip determined, we began to build upon it rapidly... Dave sent designs for the V character which were perfect apart from the fact that Dave had got the shape of the hat wrong. I began to sketch in the secondary characters that I figured we would need to tell the sort of story that it was fast becoming evident that we wanted to tell. Some of the characters lacked a face, even though I could see all of their mannerisms in my mind's eye. Between us, Dave and myself hammered out these fine details, often borrowing a face from some actor who we both felt was appropriate to the part... in many respects it was like casting a film, I suppose. However, many of the other characters Dave drew from his own vivid imagination, based upon my character notes.

From all the above, you might have been given the



impression that the creation of V was a very dry and calculating affair, and, at least in the early stages, I suppose it was. It's only those exceptional and rare individuals who have brilliant ideas delivered to them by the muse, complete and gift wrapped. The rest of us have to work at it.

That said, however, there comes a point where, assuming that all of your logic and planning is of a sound variety, the work starts to take off and assumes a vitality of its own. Ideas start to occur almost magically as opposed to being the

end result of a long and grinding intellectual process. This started to happen with V right from the first episode.

There was the way in which a lengthy Shakespeare quote that was arrived at by opening a copy of *The Collected Works* at random seemed to fit, exactly, line for line, with the sequence of actions that I had planned for V in his first skirmish with the forces of order. More important still, there was the way in which, aided by Dave's visuals, the characters began to take on



more and more of a life of their own. I'd look at a character who I'd previously seen as a one-dimensional Nazi baddy and suddenly realise that he or she would have thoughts and opinions the same as everyone else. I'd be planning one thing for the characters to do and then realise that they had an entirely different direction in which they wanted to go.

Perhaps most important of all, we began to realise that the story we were telling was wandering further and further away from the straightforward "one

man against the world" story that we'd started out with. There were elements emerging from the combination of my words and David's pictures that neither of us could remember putting there individually. There were resonances being struck that seemed to point to larger issues than the ones which we'd both come to accept as par for the course where comics were concerned.

Of course, as a comic strip begins to grow beyond its creators one experiences a certain feeling of nervousness at not

knowing where the strip is going to go next. On the other hand, there is a massive sense of excitement and creativity in such an unrestricted venture. I suppose it must feel a bit like surfing on a tidal wave... it feels great while you're doing it but you're not really sure of either where you're going to end up or whether you'll still be one piece when you get there.

All of this vague metaphysical blather aside for the moment, a lot of people have expressed an interest in how we actually put an episode of V together. Well, purely in the interests of science, this is how it goes:

To start with, we both have a rough idea of the general direction of the plot and where it's going, allowing for any sudden changes of direction that the story might decide to make for itself. We know, for example, that there will be three books in all chronicling the full V story. The first sets up the character and his world. The second, "This Vicious Cabaret," explores the supporting characters in greater depth and centres for the most part upon the character of Evey Hammond. The third book, tentatively entitled "The Land of Do-As-You-Please," draws all of these disparate threads into what we hope will be a satisfying climax.

Given that structure, I try to decide what I think is needed in any given episode, bearing in mind its relationship to the episode that came before it. I might, for example, decide that we've had an awful lot of talking lately and not much action. I might decide that it'd be nice to check on how Eric Finch or Rosemary Almond are getting on. Pretty soon I have a list of all the elements that I feel



it's vital we include in this particular issue. All that remains to be done is to fit them into a coherent storyline that is somehow complete in itself while remaining a part of a larger whole and at the same time moving with the fluidity that Dave and I are anxious to inject into the strip.

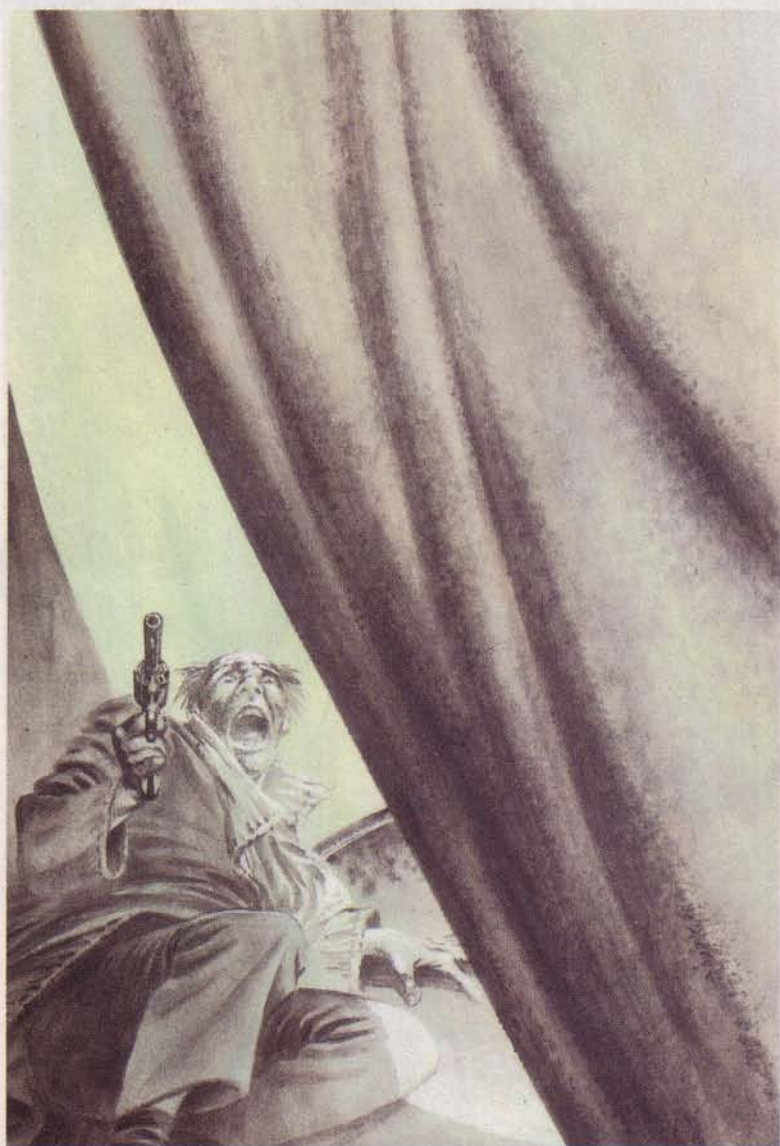
On good days, everything goes right and I have the whole script executed from start to finish within four or five hours. On bad days I write the whole script in four or five hours, realise that it's useless, tear it up and start again. I repeat this process four or five times until I'm reduced to a blubbing wreck that just slumps in the armchair and whimpers about how it has no talent whatsoever and will never write again. Next day I'll get up, get the whole thing right the first time and spend the rest of the day walking round reading my favourite bits to my wife, children, or visiting tradesmen. (This is why you should never marry an artist or writer. They're bad news to have around the house, believe me.)

Once I'm satisfied with the script, it goes to Dave. He runs through it very thoroughly, checking it for plot or character inconsistencies and trying to fig-

ure out how it's going to work visually. While I stage-manage most of the visual sequences from my end, I try to leave enough room for Dave to expand or alter them as he sees fit, so he'll add a couple of frames here and there to make the action flow more smoothly or maybe excise certain frames altogether. He then rings me up and runs through the script outlining his suggested changes. Usually, these are fairly minor and can be sorted out at once. Occasionally they're more serious and we'll argue ferociously

for hours until arriving at a sensible compromise. The only thing that is important to either of us is what ends up on the finished, printed page is as perfect as we can make it.

Dave then buckles down to the artwork and within a couple of weeks I receive an eagerly awaited package of reduced and lettered photocopies of the finished work by agency of the G.P.O. I suppose that theoretically I can decide at this juncture if there's anything in Dave's artwork that needs changing. So far, how-



ever, there hasn't been. Dave combines a remorseless professionalism with a deep emotional involvement in the strip equal to my own, and if ever he should decide to leave the strip there is not the remotest possibility of my working with anyone else upon it. V is something that happens at the point where my warped personality meets David's warped personality, and it is something that neither of us could do either by ourselves or working with another artist or writer. Despite

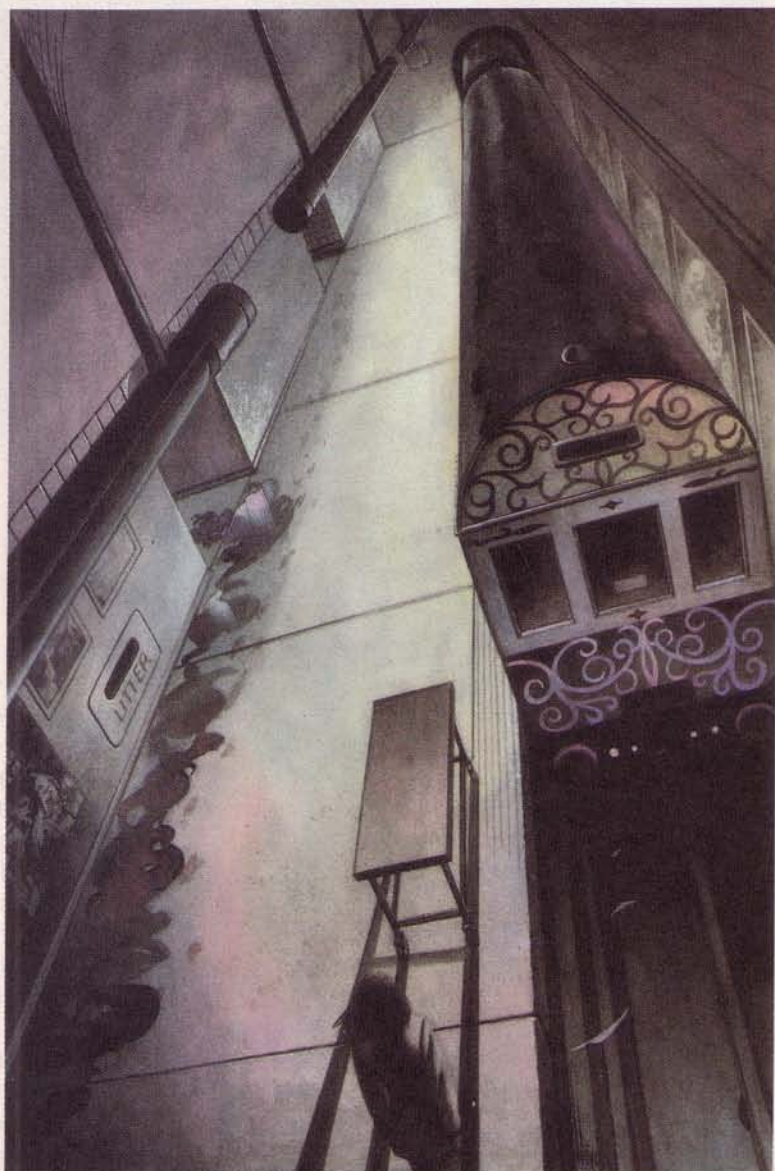
the way that some of the series' admirers choose to view it, it isn't "Alan Moore's V" or "David Lloyd's V." It's a joint effort in every sense of the word, because after trying the alternatives, that is the only way that comics can ever work. There is absolutely no sense in a writer trying to bludgeon his artist to death with vast and over-written captions, any more than an artist should try to bury his writer within a huge and impressive gallery of pretty pictures. What's called for is teamwork, in the

grand tradition of Hope and Crosby, Tate and Lyle, Pinky and Perky, or The Two Ronnies. Hopefully, that's what we've got.

So anyway, that's where we get our ideas from. I was going to go on from this point and tell you exactly who V really is, but I'm afraid that I've run out of room. The only real hint I can give is that V isn't Evey's father, Whistler's mother or Charley's aunt. Beyond that, I'm afraid you're on your own.

England Prevails.

Alan Moore
October 1983





The following two short stories were first presented in *Warrior Magazine* during the original run of *V FOR VENDETTA*. Although originally conceived as "interludes" to the main story and featuring the main settings and characters, these stories were never considered by their creators as essential chapters of the *V FOR VENDETTA* storyline. For completeness' sake, they are presented here.







THE LEDGE IS EIGHTEEN INCHES WIDE. IF IT WAS ON THE GROUND YOU WOULDN'T THINK TWICE ABOUT IT. THERE'S NO DIFFERENCE AT ALL, REALLY.



WELL, PERHAPS THERE ARE SOME DIFFERENCES...

THERE'S THAT SICK, TINGLING FEELING IN THE SOLES OF YOUR FEET. YOU DON'T GET THAT ON THE GROUND.



THERE'S THAT HORRIBLY FASCINATING WHISPER THAT ECHOES THROUGH YOUR MIND: "WHAT WILL IT BE LIKE WHEN I HIT? WILL I BE CONSCIOUS? WILL IT HURT?"



THESE ARE THINGS THAT DON'T OCCUR TO YOU WHEN YOU'RE ON THE GROUND.

... AND THEN, OF COURSE, THERE ARE THE CROSSWINDS THAT HOWL AROUND THE EDGE OF THESE TALL CONCRETE GEOMETRIES.



OH GOD.
OH NO.
OH GOD...

THINGS LIKE THAT NEVER OCCUR TO YOU...



...UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE.

UHHWOOOOOOOOOOOO



NICE NIGHT.

HE FAINTS. BLACK GLOVED HANDS DRAG HIM TO SAFETY AND HE DOESN'T KNOW A THING ABOUT IT.



IMAGINE YOU HAD A CHOICE BETWEEN CERTAIN DEATH FROM A BLACK GLOVED HAND AND THE CHANCE, HOWEVER SLIM, OF ESCAPE. WHAT WOULD YOU DO?



ALL RIGHT.

ALL RIGHT.

...AND AFTER A FEW MOMENTS, THE MAN WHO NEVER STOPS SMILING QUIETLY CLOSES THE WINDOW. HE CANNOT ABIDE DRAFTS.



OF COURSE, THE DRAFTS INSIDE ARE NOTHING...

COMPARED TO THE ONES OUTSIDE...



INSPECTOR COLIN CLARKE HAS WORKED FOR THE FINGER SINCE IT WAS FORMED IN 1992. SIX YEARS AGO, BEFORE THAT HE WAS A SOLDIER.

HE HAD TO COPE WITH WORSE THAN THIS ON HIS TRAINING COURSES. MUCH WORSE. HE CAN MAKE IT. HE KNOWS HE CAN.



AFTER ALL, EIGHTEEN INCHES IS A LOT OF ROOM. IF IT WAS ON THE GROUND YOU WOULDN'T THINK TWICE ABOUT IT...

HE TAKES A STEP. HE TAKES ANOTHER STEP AGAIN, AGAIN...



THERE IS THE MAN. THERE IS THE LEDGE. THERE IS THE DISMAL DRONE OF THE WIND, THE UNCARING GLIMMER OF THE DISTANT STARS...

BEYOND THAT THERE IS ONLY SLAPSTICK. HE TAKES A STEP...

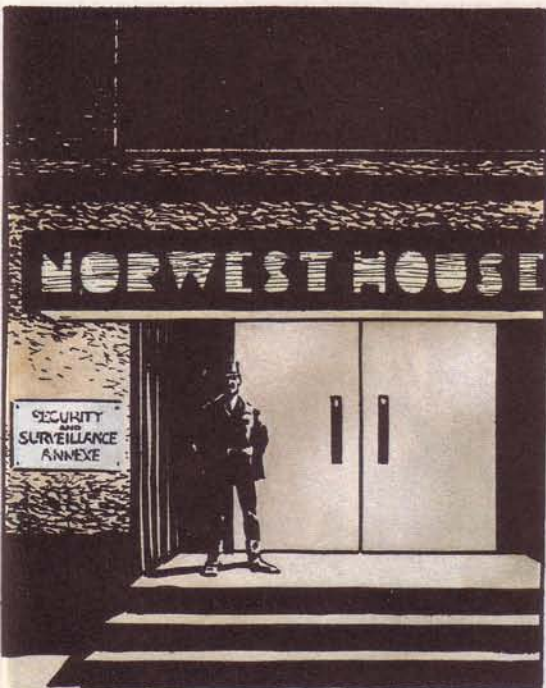


SLAPSTICK. THINGS LIKE THAT NEVER OCCUR TO YOU...

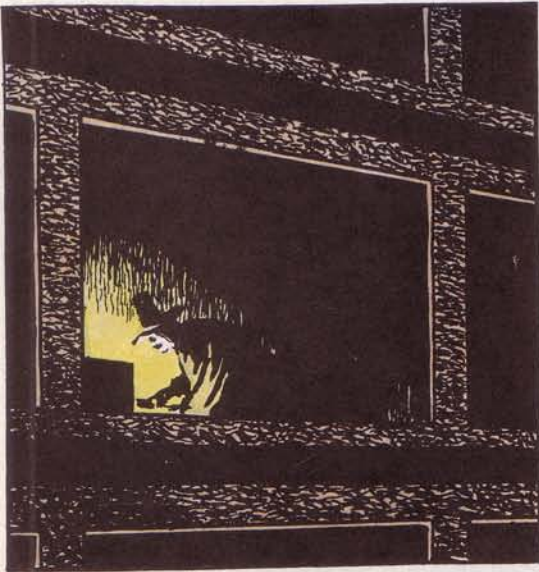


UNTIL IT'S FAR TOO LATE...

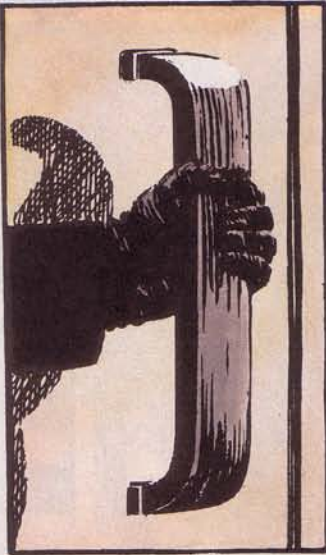




VINCENT







V FOR VENDETTA

“ Good evening, London. It's nine o'clock and this is The Voice of Fate... It is the Fifth of the Eleventh, Nineteen-Ninety-Seven...

The people of London are advised that the Brixton and Streatham areas are quarantine zones as of today. It is suggested that these areas be avoided for reasons of health and safety...

Police raided seventeen homes in the Birmingham area early this morning, uncovering what is believed to be a major terrorist ring. Twenty people, eight of them women, are currently in detention awaiting trial...

The weather will be fine until 12:07 A.M. when a shower will commence, lasting until 1:30 A.M....

Have a pleasant evening.”



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A work of sterling clarity and intelligence, **V FOR VENDETTA** is everything comics weren't supposed to be.

England Prevails.



ALAN MOORE

“ Award-winning writer Alan Moore entered comics scripting in 1980, contributing to Britain's *2000 A.D.* and *Doctor Who Weekly*. This was followed by *Marvelman* (published in the U.S. as *Miracleman*) and the original run of *V for Vendetta*. Moore entered the American comics scene in 1983 with DC Comics' *Swamp Thing* and the acclaimed *Watchmen* with Dave Gibbons. In 1988, Moore set up his own publishing imprint, Mad Love Publishing. His work also includes *Big Numbers*, with Bill Sienkiewicz, and *Lost Girls*, with Melinda Gebbie. Moore is also a contributor to *RAW*. Moore also produced the graphic novel *A Small Killing* with Oscar Zirate. Moore currently resides in England.

DAVID LLOYD

Artist David Lloyd has been drawing comic strips since 1977, beginning with film and TV adaptations. His first regular series was *Night Raven*, and Lloyd also illustrated a series of strips featuring *Dr. Who* characters, all for Marvel UK. Lloyd then co-created *V for Vendetta* with Alan Moore, for its initial run in *Warrior*. Since *V for Vendetta*, Lloyd had produced short stories for *Eclipse*, *ESPer*s with James Hudnall, *Slain* with Pat Mills, and *Crisis* stories for Fleetway. Among other pursuits, Lloyd is involved in teaching comic-book illustration at England's only school of cartoon art, The London Cartoon Center. Lloyd currently resides in Brighton, England, and he is eagerly anticipating his next visit to California.

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